

THE MUSICAL TIMES

AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR

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LENT-TERM begins Monday, January 10.

FORNTWEEKLY CONCERT, Saturday, January 22, at 3.

ORGAN RECITAL, Monday, January 31, at 3.

LECTURES by Dr. H. W. RICHARDS, on "Musical History from 1650 to 1750, including the Life Works of Henry Purcell," will be given on Wednesdays, January 26, February 2, 9, and 16, at 3.15.

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The Musical Times

AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR

JANUARY 1 1921

PERFORMING FEES

Why are the greater Elgar works so lacking in the Queen's Hall [Promenade] scheme? Is it a case of high performing fees? I do not know, but if it is, I think Mr. Newman and Sir Henry Wood and Messrs. Chappell should, in the interest of their own reputation, tell us so.

The work [Elgar's Violin Concerto] does not appear at our concerts as often as it should do, mainly, I think, because of the performing fee that is charged. So, at any rate, I was recently told by one of the half-dozen greatest of living violinists, who assured me that he loved the Concerto and would be glad to play it everywhere, but that it was simply impossible for him to pay a fee for the privilege of doing so.

The above extracts from recent articles by well-known musical journalists call for discussion. The conclusions affirmed or implied are (*a*) that certain of Elgar's orchestral works are neglected; (*b*) that this neglect is due to the publishers demanding a fee for performance; and (*c*) that a performing fee is an unjustifiable barrier erected by the publisher between composer and public.

That the works in question receive a good deal less than their due in the way of performance is true enough. (In this they share the fate of some other notable orchestral compositions of native origin.) We may ascribe the neglect to a variety of causes, but the performing fee is not one of them, as can easily be shown. Did any symphony ever receive so many performances within two years of its publication as Elgar's No. 1? Clearly, then, a fee is no obstacle to popularity. It may be argued that the cost of orchestral concerts has more than doubled since that time, and that a fee willingly paid in 1913 is withheld in 1920 on the ground of economy. There is something in this, but not much. That the removal of a fee does not solve the question is proved by the case of Elgar's Violin Concerto. Before the performing fee was taken off in 1914 the work had been very frequently played. It has been rarely heard since. We refrain from arguing on the lines of the quotations at the head of this article, because such argument would lead to the entertaining conclusion that a performing fee increases a work's popularity! We are quite content with being able to show (*1*) that a fee does not prevent frequent performance, and (*2*) that its removal does not necessarily increase the vogue of a composition.

And what of the composer's chamber works? No fee has ever been charged for their performance, yet they are not often played.

Comments such as those quoted (and they are frequent, in print and otherwise) clearly suggest that the fee is a kind of unprincipled exaction, whereas it is merely a matter of fair play. The publication

of a big orchestral work is a costly affair. When the music is of a degree of difficulty that places it beyond the power of all but our few first-class orchestras, how are composer and publisher to be recouped? Clearly the mere sale of a dozen full scores and sets of band parts will leave them heavy losers. Nobody expects a composer to work for nothing, though he often does so. Nor is it fair to ask publishers to sink capital in a production the sale of which is bound to be negligible, though as a matter of fact they do occasionally act in this unbusinesslike and disinterested way. Obviously the only fair method of paying composer and publisher—or at least of reducing their loss—is that of the performing fee. Nobody objects to the principle when applied in the cases of plays and operas. And in the matter of orchestral music we have not so far heard that Richard Strauss' works have suffered, or are likely to suffer, from the fact that heavy expenses were, and no doubt still are, attached to performances of most of his important works. Perhaps if he and his publishers were British . . .

The publishers concerned in the paragraphs quoted are Messrs. Novello. They therefore ask us to make known the following facts :

- (1.) As Messrs. Novello are not members of the Performing Rights Society, the purchase of new copies of a full score and band parts gives the original purchaser the perpetual right to perform any of their publications, with these exceptions—Elgar's two Symphonies, 'Falstaff,' and the Violoncello Concerto.
- (2.) The performing fee for these four works is on a sliding scale varying with the circumstances of the proposed performance—size of hall, frequency of performance, &c.
- (3.) The fee includes the hire of score and parts.

By the way, we note some slight inconsistency in the writer of the second of the paragraphs quoted. After ascribing the recent neglect of the Violin Concerto to the performing fee (which he mistakenly imagines is still imposed) he says :

I should not be at all surprised, however, if the result of this episode [the performance by Heifetz at the Philharmonic Concert] is a revival of the Concerto.

Nor shall we be surprised. But the revival will be independent of any question of fee, for (we repeat) the restriction was taken off six years ago. Any immediate increase in the number of performances will be due chiefly to the fact of Heifetz having renewed our interest in a work that was unavoidably laid aside during the war. Its re-appearance is somewhat belated, but we know that even in the case of a masterpiece it is far easier to drop out of the repertory than to get back again.

Finally, we are glad to see that the neglect of Elgar's orchestral works is being discussed. As the performing fee cannot well be blamed, there

must be other reasons. We have heard two put forward:

- (1.) Audiences don't want them;
- (2.) Conductors won't play them.

The writers quoted above will be doing a real service to British music by pursuing an inquiry along these lines,—especially the second.

SOME ITALIAN COMPOSERS OF TO-DAY

BY GUIDO M. GATTI (Turin)

INTRODUCTION

I am glad of this opportunity for presenting to the English public a series of sketches of the more important of Italy's contemporary composers. The opportunity is the more welcome because, in addition to explaining some of the features of our musical life, such articles will, I hope, help English readers to a juster estimation of Italian composers. At present the tendency everywhere outside Italy is to attach undue importance to the writers of a few phenomenally successful operas.

The future of Italian music is in the hands of a large group of composers, each with his own ideals, and in some cases with an outlook antipathetic to that of his fellows. For this reason it would be misleading to regard them as a school. And to call them 'the Italian School' would be specially unfortunate, in that it would perpetuate a memory we desire to efface—that of the melodramatists, who for a good many years unworthily represented Italian music to the rest of Europe. Above all, however, such wholesale classification would do a good deal less than justice to composers whose outlook is so strongly personal. The Latin individualism is much more lively in Italy than elsewhere, and Italian artists are as a rule disinclined to group themselves in little coteries. Moreover, our decentralisation prevents our musical activities from being an affair chiefly of the capital, as is the case in France, for instance. Many of the important Italian towns are centres of more or less intensive musical life, with certain characteristics that are reflected in the works of the composers who live there, and who are often the animating force behind local activities.

Thanks to these men, we have reached a stage already rich in results, and even richer in promise. The process has not been sudden or dramatic; it owes much to a little band of patient forerunners, and much also to the revival and strengthening of the national consciousness. Last, but far from least, we have to thank the awakened interest in, and study of, the musical past of Italy—a past whose glory is fully revealed only when fetishism is thrust aside and calm valuation put in its place.

Until lately our true musical tradition has been forgotten—the expressive and melodious song of Monteverde, the purity of Caldara, the infinite variety of Scarlatti and Corelli, the unrestrainable liveliness of the Neapolitan comic opera; of Cavazzoni, Michelangelo Rossi, and Frescobaldi;

of the divine Palestrina, who from the arid stone of Flemish polyphony built and raised skyward his shining and living cathedrals of sound. These glories were forgotten when, for a variety of causes, social and political, as well as artistic, Italy suddenly confined her musical activities to the theatre and left all the other fields to the foreigner.

During the eighty years that elapsed between the French Revolution and the proclamation of Rome as the capital of the kingdom (1789-1870) not one important musical work outside the field of opera was produced in Italy. (Cherubini and Clementi at first sight appear to disprove this statement. Rather do they prove it, for the greater part of their work was done in France and England respectively.)

Then came the Veridian melodrama, in which all is vocalisation and gesture, and in which the development of dramatic action, the delineation of character, and the quest for the musical value of the text are sacrificed to the impetuous lyrical impulse. But the melodrama of Verdi speedily exhausted itself in sterile recapitulation. After the historic cycle of the Italian *risorgimento* it declined rapidly. Of little service, too, was the Wagnerian parenthesis (fortunately brief)—a parenthesis which comprised the last survivors of the Romantic period.

In the closing years of the century came the first gleams of the dawn. The sense of spiritual uneasiness and the desire for more breathing space expressed itself in symphonic efforts—often formal and technical. Soon, however, the pioneers began to throw off the German tradition—the first of our foreign musical tyrannies, endured as an escape from the not less heavy tyranny of our operatic convention.

Sgambati (1843), fired by Liszt, resisted the call of the opera-house and devoted himself to abstract music; but neither he nor Martucci (who may be called the Italian Brahms), nor M. E. Bossi, nor G. Orefice, nor L. Sinigaglia escaped northern influence. Their numerous and often admirable compositions have been useful mainly in leading a somewhat reluctant public towards an appreciation of pure music—not a light task, in view of the hold obtained by the bourgeois melodrama of Mascagni and Puccini.

With the end of the 19th century arose a new star in Debussy, followed by a number of composers skilful and cultivated to a degree hitherto rare among musicians. This group influenced all Europe more or less—Italy decidedly more. But our young Italian composers, though they were perhaps the first to be fascinated by the new light from France, were also the first to shake off anything like undue influence.

Nevertheless the Italian composers of fifteen or twenty years ago derived great benefit from Debussy's work. It opened the window of the heavily romantic 18th century musical edifice, substituting new tonalities for the chromatic diatonic unimodality, and injecting a new rhythmic

sense. But through the open window entered, with these invigorating novelties, the heavy scent of the epicurean and restless cities, and much of this impressionism soon found opponents among the young composers who were striving for the liberation of Italian music.

Such liberation can be brought about only by simultaneous negation and construction—negation of all that is foreign to the spirit and genius of our race; construction of an idiom new, but yet deriving from the voices and aesthetics of our past.

During the last ten years we have seen arise in our midst a group of composers who have no cause to fear comparison with those of other countries. A few are already mature; others are as yet in the stages of development, but already showing strong personal characteristics. We may

at last claim that Italy is cultivating all the forms of music. Chamber and orchestral music have now as many adherents as the opera. If the public at home and abroad does not yet know and appreciate the works of these men, it is because our organisations for the performance of such compositions are few and imperfect. Moreover, the publishers (especially those whose interest it is to prolong the operatic phase of our musical history) do little to help these disinterested composers. This is a practical difficulty that we hope will soon be overcome. At present we must look to the small and discerning public that in this as in all movements is as a leaven slowly working in the mass.

So much by way of prelude. When we have passed in review our group of composers, we shall, I hope, perceive that, despite the fact of their being strongly individualistic rather than members of a school, they nevertheless show sufficient traits in common to enable us to grasp the general physiognomy of contemporary Italian music.

(To be continued.)

THE CONCERT-ROOM SONG

By ARTHUR L. SALMON

It cannot be denied that the kind of song now popular in concert-room and drawing-room is in some respects an advance on that which was loved by our parents and grandparents; and yet it must be deplored that the popular taste still runs to the inartistic. The old song, with its usually unvaried three stanzas of psalm-tune type, was too subservient to its words and yet not sufficiently interpretative. It clung to its verses almost as rigidly as the common congregational hymn, which, of necessity perhaps, pursues its way stolidly through five or six stanzas of fluctuating and changing emotion. Even with this stereotyped form we know that something can be done when the emotion and sentiment are genuine, when there is sincerity behind it; and while we do not call it artistic, we may be almost tempted to say that it can rise to something greater than art. Similarly it was possible for the conventional song to accomplish great things at

times. Perhaps the folk-song and its congeners must stand in a different class; such songs, let us say, as 'Annie Laurie' or the 'Banks of Allan Water' have a permanent appeal, and never grow old. They are pure lyric, and do not seem to be hampered by the restrictions of their form. The change of emotion that the actual notes do not supply has to be given by the singer; in 'Allan Water,' for instance, the first verse is entirely gay, the last utterly sad, but the music is the same. This song, however, and many others that could be quoted, are in a class by themselves, like the popular ballads of a countryside, and do not call for criticism; we need not say they are above it, but they are outside of it—they are humanly true, authentic, enduring. They seem to have been born rather than made. With the made song on similar lines the case is different; we have a right to criticise it, as we may criticise all conscious and deliberate art or artifice. And we recognise gladly enough that this pattern has almost entirely been abandoned of late years. Its prevalence was perhaps chiefly broken by Sullivan, though something must be said for the work of such earlier song-writers as Bishop, Balfe, and Hatton. Sullivan himself, in some of his first efforts, was guilty of the 'psalm-tune' method, but he broke loose from it, largely by introducing variety in his accompaniments. In his immensely successful 'Lost Chord' it will be noticed that the change from verse to verse is rather in the accompaniment than in the melody; and this song, not absolutely without merit, is a standing example of what the public loves. It is written to sentimental clap-trap that means nothing or anything, but there is just enough definite emotion to make the average listener feel devout and good, and its meaning or lack of meaning could be grasped by the utterly unmusical—that is to say, by the vast majority of hearers. Such was the taste of an age that loved the compositions of 'Claribel,' Virginia Gabriel, Blockley, and that was raised to pious ecstasy by 'The Better Land.' These things are 'back numbers' now. Sullivan survives, of course, though with dwindling reputation; there was certainly some real genius behind the immense bulk of often second-rate stuff that he produced. But the song-writer of to-day has passed on to other methods, and in many instances to a fuller realisation of what the art of song-writing demands.

Such changes begin at the top and work downwards. Composers, and the better class of listener, were greatly influenced by the songs that came to us from the Continent. It was wholly impossible to compare such work as that of Schubert and Schumann, Robert Franz, Brahms, Loewe, Wolf, Reger, with the product that had satisfied the English concert-goer; Germany was putting us to shame. For one thing, the words were different, and the words of a song are mainly important, not for their literary value, but as setting the key, prompting the sentiment. Thought-laden poetry is not desirable, nor is perfection of form a

necessity ; but lyrists such as Goethe, Heine, Lenau, could give alike perfection of form and perfection of emotion—the one desirable thing. They did not gush with false or shoddy sentimentality ; their emotion was true and pure. Even this would not have been enough, but the musicians who handled them were artists of equal sincerity. The song was no longer subservient to its words, but was interpretative of them ; the two things became as one—the emotion of the poet was the emotion of the composer, and the scope of the music was limited not by the external form but by the inward feeling. A real lyric should suggest and intimate, not describe ; these lyrics suggested an authentic emotion and then became more or less negligible because they had done their work.

We must not suppose that a good song should be simply a rendering or interpretation of the verses ; in a certain sense it must pass beyond this, using the words as stepping-stones. It must carry on the words' suggestiveness into that region which transcends the articulate. Admitting that music at its highest is wordless, the verse has still its vital use as a sign-post, an indication. Yet this same sign-post followed by different temperaments, may lead in directions that appear widely unlike, as we find in settings of the same lyric by different composers. For instance, we may compare Loewe's version of the 'Erl-King' with that of Schubert ; the latter is almost purely lyrical, Loewe's is essentially dramatic. In both we get the emotion, the idea that the words have suggested ; and in listening the actual words do not matter much, as they matter when we read them quietly as a poem. But we shall find that they matter more in the dramatic rendering than in the lyrical. An entirely lyric song passes almost into wordlessness ; as we find in Grieg's familiar Solveig's Song, where at the most poignant moment the music actually becomes wordless. May we not say that this manner of treatment, where the composer is inspired but not enslaved by his words, is distinctive of the truly artistic song, and that it has not often been attained by English song-writers ? It would be invidious to particularise the successful songs that at this moment hold the ears of the British public ; it would be unwise to speak too critically of the novelties that are ordinarily presented at the popular ballad-concerts. We can frankly recognise that many of these reach a higher level than was common half-a-century since ; many reveal a transitional groping towards a more pure artistic expression. But the song that is really popular, that wins a circulation of hundreds of thousands, that brings a fortune to its composer or its publisher, is a song whose human appeal may be genuine enough but whose artistic value is actually nil. We must not sneer at those who enjoy these songs as adequately interpretative of their own emotions ; just as we should not sneer at those readers who prefer Ella Wilcox to Wordsworth. The demand is there ; it will be satisfied whether we like it or not—and in fact it has every right to be satisfied. But we ourselves have also every right to judge its

product by a standard other than that of the millions, and we have every right to hope that some day the public will reach higher perceptions of pure musical utterance. There are necessarily many gradations of taste, all with their legitimate demand—except where that demand is absolutely vicious and hurtful, and it is probably useless to expect that the general taste will reach the standard that we term classical. But surely the present level is a little lower than it need be. It is not that the British composer cannot write good songs, though his main tendencies have not been in that direction ; there are many songs of genuine artistic quality that have been published but remain comparatively unknown, and many others, we may be sure, that find no chance of publication because publishers are business-men who will not sink money in a non-paying investment. In the book-world at this moment we hear that the new writer has no chance, because, with costs so high as they are now, publishers will venture only on the known author whose name itself will ensure remunerative sale. This has always been the case with the composer, and to-day it is more so than ever. Thus that which should be a purely artistic question becomes hopelessly involved with matters of finance ; and it is undeniable that under existing conditions the artistic song does not pay. Even if published, it has little opportunity for being heard, the popular singers prefer songs that bring fees and royalties. There is a constant temptation to those who know and can do better, to provide what is likely to find a market. We have to fall back on the consoling thought that only the weaker-kneed will yield to this lower lure, and that the ultimate loss to music may not be great. The true writer, the true composer, thinks of himself first ; he has the sublime egotism that demands its own expression, its own utterance ; any question of listeners or readers is really secondary. That is an entire truth, and all good work brings its reward to him who does it. But when the production is achieved, why should those who might appreciate and love it be deprived of their enrichment ?

THE ORGAN WORKS OF BACH

(Continued from December number, page 810)

BY HARVEY GRACE

IV.—THE LATER WEIMAR PRELUDES AND FUGUES—continued.

The Toccata in F is one of the finest of the big preludial movements. Like the Dorian work it has neither the brilliance nor the rhapsodical quality we usually associate with the title. Instead there is immense and unflagging vigour, a spacious design, and a power of development that even Bach himself rarely if ever exceeded.

Continuous as the work is, one thinks of it as being in two parts. The canonic sections and the pedal solos fill 168 bars, the remaining 270 being concerned with development. We are apt to overlook the daring shown in the long introduction. It is a bold step to open a work with a long canon

(55 bars) over a pedal point, followed by a pedal solo of 25 bars. Even bolder is the immediate repetition of both canon and solo. But there is no impression of things being at a standstill: the effect is that of a preamble, and one so spacious that we know it must be followed by something even bigger. Bach's method of leading into the main body of the work is worth noting. The second pedal solo ended, we expect the full close with which the first solo was clinched. We get it too, but half a dozen bars later, the cadence being held off by this splendid series of chords:

Ex. 1.

With the full close in C major the pedal leads off with what is sometimes described as a new subject. But its opening figure has already been anticipated by the arpeggio in bar 10 of the pedal solo:

Ex. 2.

The only new matter is the simple descending bass, but the ear is hardly conscious of this, owing to a close imitation of the arpeggio in the manual part:

Ex. 3.

The manual has even less new material, for the last three chords are merely the cadence used at the end of the pedal solos. Even that was but a more concise and emphatic form of the treble in bar 4:

Ex. 4.

As the arpeggio figure (Ex. 3) is clearly a derivative of:

Ex. 5.

used in the opening bar of the movement, we see that the greater part of this gigantic work of 438 bars is developed from an arpeggio of the common chord and a simple cadence, alternated with fugal treatment of the opening bars of the canon theme. In the whole range of music there are few if any more striking examples of steady and easily followed growth. It is a musical illustration of the parable of the grain of mustard seed. How the tiny shoot becomes the twig, and the twig the branch, is shown over and over again, as thus:

Ex. 6. (Bar 155.)

(a)

(b)

(c)

(sustained for 23 bars.)

Another example: we have seen how the simple cadence at the close of the first pedal solo was developed into a striking series of chords. With Bach it is never too late to amplify, so in the last page we find these chords given a new aspect by being threaded on a long manual note:

Ex. 7.

And observe how, as a result of the interrupted cadence:

Ex. 8.

yet another limb is thrown out—a new member, but in its chords, arpeggio figure, and in the semi-quaver passages of the right hand and pedal later, showing its relation to the main stem. So close is this logical method throughout that we are hardly conscious of the fact that the movement contains a good deal of repetition. The repeated matter is usually in a fresh key, and there is almost always some slight change in the way it is approached, or

in the disposition of its parts. One might easily give a course of lessons on development from this movement. Let the student go carefully through it away from the keyboard. He will see (if he never saw before) that this is one of the considerable number of Bach's works of which it is difficult to speak without seeming to indulge in hyperbole.

A few words on the method of performance. Owing to the numerous rests in both manual and pedal parts, there is abundant opportunity for changes of registration. Nevertheless we shall do well to adopt a straightforward scheme. All the component parts of the work are of a vigorous type, and the use of delicate stops is unsuitable. As Widor and Schweitzer say: 'The performance of the Toccata requires classic simplicity in both technical execution and registration. It tolerates no "modernizing" whatsoever. In particular, all effects to be brought out by the alternation of the manuals should be eschewed. The style of Bach's writing, and the uninterrupted employment of the pedal, show clearly that he wished only the great manual to be used. Why act contrary to his intention?'

If we confine ourselves to the Great, we must avoid too continuous a use of heavy tone. We may well dispense with 16-ft. pedal stops for an occasional spell, if we have a good supply of strong and characteristic 8-ft. pedal tone available. But here as usual each player must decide on a scheme best suited to his organ and building. Widor and Schweitzer point out that as the two-measure group forms the rhythmic unit, the movement is really in 6-8 time. Here are three suggestions as to pace: Bridge and Higgs, $\text{d} = 120$; Best-Hull, $\text{d} = 132$; Griepenkerl, $\text{d} = 76$. The last is surely not much more than half the right pace.

There is general agreement on textual details, though Griepenkerl tells us that as the autograph was lost, it was necessary to collate no less than seven manuscripts in order to arrive at the work as we know it. The chief differences were found in the pedal solos, which had evidently been cut down by various players whose pedal organs stopped at D above middle C. Very few organs at that time had the top F in the pedals. Among them was the Cöthen instrument, so we may assume that Bach either wrote the work there or amplified the pedal passages so as to include the unusual high notes.

A foot-note in the Best-Hull edition says that 'some players (Guilmant amongst others) hold that such passages as :



were produced by the limitations of Bach's footing technique, and should be played as straightforward scales.' But what of the Prelude in D major, written some years earlier? That work opens with three scales much more difficult than this passage would have been. And we have seen

Bach going on tour with the C major Toccata which contains the most difficult of his pedal solos. It was probably his playing of this solo that drew from the Crown Prince Friedrich a ring set in precious stones. An eyewitness of the performance (at Cassel, in 1714) says: 'His feet flew over the pedal-board as if they had wings! Are we to imagine that some years later Bach shied at such a simple matter as a rising scale of c, d, e, f, g, a ? We must find another explanation if an explanation be necessary. Probably Bach wrote the passage in its somewhat uncouth form because he felt that the rough vigour of the zigzagging bass was in keeping, just as at the end of the short E minor Prelude he makes the pedal stride in 10ths instead of 3rds. An even more likely explanation is that he carried on the idea of descending 7ths from the preceding passage. We know his weakness for this progression. If we take the whole passage, and phrase it as a succession of 7ths, it is not only logical, but much less clumsy:



The low E is sometimes flattened, but both here and in the corresponding passage in D minor (page 183, bar 2), the so-called melodic form of the rising minor scale seems more natural.

Speaking of this Toccata, Pirro says ('L'Orgue de Jean-Sebastien Bach'): 'Though remarkably brilliant, it is marked by a certain dryness, at least, in its opening; it is rather too much of a bravura type—perhaps the last Bach wrote. This is surely not the general opinion. 'Remarkable brilliance' is not the prime characteristic of the work, nor is the canonic portion dry. The pedal solos are not showily difficult, and have none of the futility common to their class, because they take up and carry on the argument started by the manuals. The right adjective for the work is Parry's—'colossal.' And Mendelssohn hit the nail, when, writing from Sargans in 1831, describing a recital he had given there, he said that 'the Toccata in F, with the modulation at the end, sounded as if it would bring the church down,' adding: 'He was a tremendous Cantor. Tremendous, indeed! It would be interesting to know what Bach's contemporaries thought of some of the more daring passages in the Toccata. Probably not many swallowed them without some straining, and we may be sure that a few bewigged heads were shaken over the grinding final cadence.'



Ex. 11.

or Toccata of his pedigree of this son of his father, a richness of the : 'His feet had wings later. Bach's playing scale of explanation, probably Bach's couth form of the big at the end the pedal even more in the idea of passage. Session. Else it is a but much

both here D minor c form of

"L'Orgue remarkably artlessness, at much of a which wrote. opinion. the prime portion difficult, and their class. argumentative for Mendelssohn in 1831, he said modulation the church Cantor, testing to of some Toccata, but some swiggled cadence:

After these gigantic goings on, the fugue, with its slow, brief, and plain subject, seems, as Parry says, 'almost superfluous.' It is undervalued because most of us compare it with the Toccata, whereas it is so widely different in style and mood that we may imagine Bach deliberately doing his best to make comparison impossible. But the fact is that after so lengthy and exuberant a work as the Toccata there is a call for nothing else save a few minutes' rest for both player and hearer. We must use the Fugue as a separate work, and judge it on its merits. These are so considerable that had it not been so completely overshadowed by the Toccata it would have been among the most justly esteemed of the fugues just below the handful of masterpieces.

When, some years before, Bach essayed to write a double fugue (on a theme of Legrenzi) he failed badly. The result was too long, and it sounded even longer than it was because he adopted the mechanical plan of giving out the second subject *salvo*, afterwards making a further hold-up by resting two parts while the pair of subjects were shown in combination.

In the F major Fugue the method is far less leisurely. The subjects are short, the second is brought on accompanied, and the combination is managed in such a way that instead of making things hang fire it increases the interest and animation. There are three fairly defined sections, of course, but they run into one another so naturally that there is no effect of scrappiness. And the contrast is admirable—first the thoughtful four-part treatment of:



leading straight into three-part working, for manuals only, of the well-contrasted second subject:



The third section (wisely the shortest) maintains the quaver movement set up by the second subject and gives us some delightful three- and four-part writing, with the two themes worked together. A curious point is that the first subject makes one entry as an inner part before being combined with the second. Works in this form are so scarce that few rules exist, but obviously it is desirable that the first subject should not be heard in the final section—especially at its return—save in combination with the second. Perhaps this little irregularity puts the fugue out of court so far as Prout was concerned. In his 'Fugue,' speaking of examples on more than one subject, he ignores the F major, but analyses the C minor, describing it as 'masterly,' and 'one of the most perfect examples, as regards

its form.' This may be so, but on purely musical grounds the F major is immeasurably superior. The gravity of its opening, and the sober cheerfulness of the remainder, make it an admirable voluntary. Though probably earlier in date than the Toccata, its harmony and the freedom of its counterpoint show the almost—if not quite—mature Bach.

By the by, the harsh, simultaneous use of B flat and B natural in the eighth bar from the end is easily explainable, the B flat being an auxiliary note. Widor and Schweitzer suggest D instead of B flat in the tenor, but most of us will prefer the passage as Bach evidently wrote it.

The G minor Fantasia and Fugue is perhaps the latest of the Weimar works. There is general agreement as to its having been written for performance at Hamburg when Bach went there in 1720. This explains the reversion in the Fantasia to a style of writing which he had more or less discarded for some years. We have seen that the other Preludes written at this time usually consist of close development of one or two ideas. In the Fantasia he takes up again the free rhapsodic methods of the Northern composers. As Spitta says, 'Bach seems to have wished to meet the Hamburg organists on their own peculiar ground.' The result is the finest of all his essays in the quasi-improvisation form. If some of its transports now strike us as being a little on the conventional side, it is because they are expressed in terms that Bach's imitators have worn threadbare. You have only to give most German organ composers a sheet of music paper with 'Fantasia' written at the top, and they will with fatal readiness fill it with demisemiquaver recitative passages punctuated with big chords. The device is one well suited to the organ, but it has the defect of not wearing well, and it too often leads to incoherence.

The G minor Fantasia leaves other works of the type far behind, because its passage-writing is expressive and full of harmonic suggestion, and even more because of the skill with which these passages are balanced and contrasted by fine polyphony, chains of suspensions, and daring modulations, with a fine pedal part as basis. In Bach's earlier essays in this field we frequently find such contrasting passages almost if not quite as loose in texture as the recitative passages to which they act as foil.

Compare such easy-going methods with that employed here. Note how, the opening flourish over, Bach applies a corrective in the shape of a brief section in which the three-manual parts discuss very closely a figure based on the diminished 5th, while the pedal in a more deliberate way deals with a similar motive. Violent as is the contrast between these two sections, the second seems to grow out of the first quite naturally, and its persistent dissonance maintains the emotional note struck by the opening. It reappears after another free passage, this time with changes both in the key and in the

order of entry of the voices. It leads into some new material, with a bass that makes us long for a pedal-board of four octaves, so that we might carry the splendid scale down in one sweep instead of coming up for three fresh starts.

The demisemiquaver passages in this work seem to call for a more measured style of playing than similar flights of Bach's earlier period. They are far more definite in rhythm and harmonic feeling, and in some cases a kind of check is placed on them by accompanying parts. The phrasing implied in Bach's grouping, *plus* some of the elasticity of a cadenza, will be more satisfactory than eccentric rushings and haltings. Some editions suggest quiet Swell stops for these passages, but the character of the movement as a whole seems to call for a good deal of tone, if it can be employed with clearness. By the by, the unusual progression :



is watered down in the Best-Hull edition by a \natural before the alto E. Bach was always rather daring in his use of the augmented 6th, so we have no grounds for doubt about the flat.

This work and the Chromatic Fantasia may be regarded as companions. Perhaps the organ piece is the superior, partly because it contains more contrast, and also because it is shorter and less diffuse.

Griepenkerl tells us that in no manuscripts were the Fantasia and Fugue found together. However, on the back of an old copy of the Fantasia the theme of the Fugue was written, with an indication that it should follow the Fantasia. On this authority Griepenkerl printed them together for the first time. In one MS. of the Fugue the work is in F minor, but this was evidently a transposition, judging from the alterations in the pedal part, where the CC of the original becomes B \flat and the copyist had to dodge up an octave.

A good deal of interest is attached to the subject. There seems to be no doubt that Bach played the work to Reinken during the Hamburg visit, and that he went prepared to please the old man, for the theme is obviously based on the opening of Reinken's fifth Sonata in his 'Hortus Musicus':



Mattheson tells us in his 'Generalbassschule' that at an organ examination in 1725 he gave the candidates the following subject for the extempore fugue test :

Ex. 16.



He does not mention the source, but says that he knows well who was the first to work it out artistically. He adds that he chose so familiar a subject in order that the candidates might come well through the ordeal—a method of conducting examinations that is not yet so dead as might be imagined, for I remember a child receiving a sight-reading certificate from a college that shall be nameless, the test being one of Schumann's 'Scenes of Childhood,' which, like most of his fellow aspirants, she knew well! But if Mattheson was so familiar with the theme, why did he give it in such a miserably pruned form? Schweitzer says that Herr Keller, of Stuttgart, explains the discrepancy thus: Mattheson could not give the subject to the candidate in its original form 'because according to the rules of the fugue it was incorrect. It is laid down in the rules that a fugue theme shall not extend over an octave. The Hamburg examiner therefore thought it necessary to alter Bach's theme in order to bring it into conformity with the eternal laws of the art.' In this case the law has proved to be a good deal less eternal than Mattheson thought it to be.

The popularity of the fugue (even in the most unlikely quarters) is easily understood. In melody and rhythm the subject is one of the most attractive ever devised, and its treatment is marked by a clarity and finish that defy criticism. It is not the greatest of Bach's fugues—at least three others show no less technical mastery combined with greater depth and power—but it is a unique example of his ability to carry through a long and elaborate scheme without a hint of failure either in deftness or spontaneity. The latter quality is the more notable because Bach handicaps himself by a regular counter-subject—indeed, we may say there are two, for the treble of bars 10-12 so frequently accompanies the subject and counter-subject that it is hardly less important. The three are used in triple counterpoint, five of the six possible combinations being used. The fugue is rich in episodes, the most notable being the ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , which introduces the little figure ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , probably a derivative of the ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , ϵ , with which the third episode opens (see Ex. 18). It is nothing in itself, but see how Bach plays with it from time to time until the end. There is no need to dwell on the numerous enjoyable features of so familiar a work, but mention may be made of the long series of chords of the 6th with which bar 61 opens—the

are nearly forty of them, and they provide a very jolly way of going down the keyboards—and the way the rather old-fashioned Alberti passage



is made tremendously alive by being immediately caught up and repeated by the treble and alto.

The registration presents few problems. We shall naturally go over to a second manual for the middle section, the most convenient point being:



The next entry of the subject may easily be soloed on the Choir or Great, *mf*, the right hand coming back to the Swell at the second semi-quaver of the fourth beat in bar 46. We may drop on to the Great for the last note in bar 50, and solo the subject, the right hand following at the last note of bar 53. The two-part passage from the end of bar 93 to the middle of bar 103 goes well on the full Choir. The left hand should of course complete the descending scale in bar 94 before being transferred. The effect of this is so good that we need not mind if the Choir entry is temporarily killed. The full Swell passage may begin with the left hand at the last note in bar 100, the right hand going over with the seventh note in bar 103. Both go on to the full Great immediately after the pedal entry in bar 110. These changes are legitimate, because they can all be carried out without breaking the flow. The general scheme should be on the loud side. Widor and Schweitzer say: 'Inconceivable it is that there have been "virtuosi" who so far misunderstood the proud, vigorous character of this theme as to let it enter, at the outset, in *piano* on the second manual.'

This brings us to the end of Bach's second period—or, as some prefer to call it, his first master-period. There remain to be considered three groups of works: (a) the Trio-sonatas and a few pieces written, like the sonatas, for pedal-cembalo; (b) the eighteen choral preludes collected by Bach himself, the six arranged for Schübler, the preludes in the 'Clavierubung,' and the canonic variations on 'Vom Himmel hoch'; and (c) the four great preludes and fugues written in his closing years at Leipsic.

(To be continued.)

The Title-page and Index of Volume 61 (January to December, 1920) are now ready, and can be had post free by subscribers on application to the publishers.

B

NEW LIGHT ON EARLY TUDOR COMPOSERS

BY W. H. GRATTAN FLOOD

XIV.—RICHARD BRAMSTON

Just as in the case of Thomas Farthing, whose name was included in Morley's *Valhalla* of 16th century English composers, so also in the case of Richard Bramston, praised by Morley in his 'Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practical Musick' in 1597, we have had no exact biographical data hitherto. 'Master Bramston,' so far as English musical historians are concerned, has remained a ghost-like figure, of whom nothing has been chronicled by Burney, Hawkins, Chappell, Davey, or Grove, save an incidental reference to some of his compositions. Even Mr. Cecil Forsyth, in the chapter on 'The Golden Age,' in the recent 'History of Music' by Sir Charles Stanford and Forsyth (1916), merely includes the name of Bramston in a foot-note as an English composer whose works are to be met with in manuscript. But though many of Bramston's compositions have disappeared, the few that remain give ample evidence of his abilities as a polyphonic composer. Dr. Ernest Walker says that his works deserve mention, yet from a cursory examination I would be inclined to place Bramston's Motet, 'Recordare, Domine, testamenti' as evidencing potential powers quite equal to those of Taverner, Redford, Cowper, or Johnson. In this MS., which will be found among the Add. MSS. 17802-17805 of the British Museum, his name appears as 'Master Bramston.' Another beautiful Motet, 'Marie Virginis,' is in Peterhouse College, Cambridge.*

It is only fair to state that a brief reference to Bramston is given by Mr. John E. West in his excellent book on 'Cathedral Organists' (Novello, 1899)—a book that ought to be revised and reissued—under date of 1507, when he was appointed deputy-organist of Wells Cathedral in place of 'Richard Hugo.' Mr. West, however, did not identify Hugo, and it may be added that the name conceals the identity of Richard Hygons—the composer of a beautiful five-part 'Salve Regina' in the famous Eton MS.—of whom I purpose treating in my next article.

Of Richard Bramston's birth and education there is no evidence forthcoming, but he was a chorister of Wells Cathedral under Henry Abyndon, Robert Wydow, Mus. Bac., and Richard Hygons, between the years 1480 and 1500. Wells at this time was distinguished for its musical traditions, traditions that were carefully fostered by Wydow (who was sub-Dean), Thomas Cornish, Bishop of Tinos (the Precentor), and Hugh Inge (Succentor) in 1500-07. The choirboys were so good that two of them were impressed for the Chapel Royal, and in the account book of William Capron, who was Communal from 1504 to 1505, there is an entry of ten shillings paid to the royal commissioner who had come 'to take choristers for the King's chapel.'

On January 23, 1507, as appears from the Chapter Acts, Richard Bramston was admitted, on probation, as a vicar-choral of Wells. Six months later, on July 23, he undertook to deputise as organist for Richard Hygons, for which he was to be paid 5s. for the half-quarter at Michaelmas, and from that day at the rate of '40s. a year.' He was also

* See Dr. Jebb's Catalogue in the *Ecclesiologist* for 1859.

employed to teach the choristers. It appears from the Chapter Acts that Bramston was not only to play the organ 'in the great choir and the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary,' but had to act as 'keeper of the organs.'

So highly-esteemed were the services of Bramston as temporary organist and master of the choristers, that the Chapter unanimously voted for his retention as vicar-choral in perpetuity, or 'perpetual vicar,' provided that he was diligent in pursuing his musical studies during the following year. This appointment is dated January 25, 1508. It is of interest to note that another vicar who had been on probation was not given the post of perpetual vicar, because it had been testified by John Aleyne and fourteen other vicars-choral that 'he had not a competent voice and was of evil conversation.'

Bramston resigned his post as deputy-organist in May, 1508, and was succeeded by John Clawsy, who graduated Mus. Bac. at Oxford in the following year. Naturally, Bramston preferred his assured Vicar-choralship, and with a view to qualifying for it, he studied for sub-deaconship. This we learn from a Chapter Act dated September 4, 1509, in which Bramston was warned that he must take sub-deacon's orders before the ensuing Christmas, 'on pain of privation.'

On February 16, 1510, a letter was written to two canons of Wells to petition King Henry VIII, against the not infrequent practice of taking up the Wells choristers, and citing the recent case of Richard Bramston, who had lately taken away 'one of our best queresters, that is to say, Farr'; also to petition the King that the Wells Chapter might have permission to impress any boys in monastic or other churches in the diocese to serve Wells Cathedral choir.

Unfortunately there is a lacuna in the Chapter Acts from 1513 to 1534, but there is preserved a charter of the year 1530-31, in which Richard Bramston, vicar-choral, had 'leave of absence from Matins during his lifetime, and two months' leave in each year,' and was confirmed in his 'annuity of 7d. a week as Clerk of Works of the Cathedral Church.' On the same day (January 31, 1530-31) he was granted by the Dean and Chapter of Wells an annuity of £4 in consideration of surrendering his office as Clerk of Works, and 'of his surrender of the office of Master of the Choristers, for which he was paid 26s. 8d. a year.' Both of these interesting documents are signed by 'Ryc. Bramston,' and sealed with his seal, 'a girl's head in profile, to the dexter.' ('MSS. of the Dean and Chapter of Wells,' vol. ii., p. 701.)

Bramston's successor as Master of the Choristers was John Smith, jun., in 1536. Nevertheless the composer was somewhat of a pluralist, because owing to the favour of Thomas Lord Cromwell, he was a prebendary of the College of Creditor, and duly received a pension after the dissolution of the collegiate church of 40s. annually, from 1540 till his death some years later.

THE 'BEGGAR'S OPERA'

BY FRANK KIDSON

Writers, both early and late, lay a great deal of stress upon the political motives and satire which underlie the 'Beggar's Opera.' Sir John Hawkins, in his 'History of Music,' 1776, accuses John Gay, the author, in no measured terms, stating that 'his acrimonious expressions and bitter invectives against

statesmen, lawyers, priests, and others' contained in the piece were due to Gay's disappointment in his application for preferment at Court. Hawkins further delivers the extraordinary dictum that owing to the performance of the opera

Rapine and violence have been gradually increasing ever since its first representation. The rights of property, and the obligation of the laws that guard it, are disputed upon principle. . . . Young men, apprentices, clerks in public offices, and others, disdaining the arts of honest industry and captivated with the charms of idleness and criminal pleasure, now betake themselves to the road, affect politeness in the very act of robbery, and in the end become victims to the justice of their country. . . . and not a few of those who during the last fifty years have paid to the law the forfeit of their lives have in the course of their pursuits been emulous to imitate themannen and general character of Macheath.

Dr. Burney, with a number of other contemporaneous writers, appears to be of a like manner of thinking and misses in a very obtuse way the whole point of Gay's brilliant satire.

Dr. Johnson was wiser than his friends. He says:

I do not believe that any man was ever made a rogue by being present at its representation. He, however, admits that it 'may have some influence by making the character of a rogue familiar, and in some degrees pleasing.'

Another set of writers claim that its chief purpose was to ridicule the Italian opera, and that it drove this off the stage with 'Lumps of Pudding'—the last tune in Gay's opera.

How far this notion is correct or not is questionable. The fact is that the Italian opera practically expired about the time the 'Beggar's Opera' was put upon the stage. It had had a run of more than twenty years, and, while it had captivated the *dilettanti*, had never been popular with the ordinary English citizen. The political allusions in the 'Beggar's Opera' are feeble, and more general than personal, but the whole is a poignant exposure of the corrupt prison system and of the vile creatures in whose management it lay. The wonder is that those who so smugly denounced its morality were not roused to protest against the real evil that Gay so strongly painted. There is any amount of evidence that the picture he presents is not an exaggerated one. Peachum may be a reflection of Jonathan Wild, and Lockit of the usual type of prison-keeper; and it is quite obvious that these were not merely representative of Newgate but must have had prototypes all over the country.

It is not the purpose of this article to discuss the moral or political side of the 'Beggar's Opera,' but to deal with it in its musical aspect. As all musicians know, the country had been flooded with operas of Italian origin, theme, or influence. The more sturdily produced to which Henry Purcell had supplied the music had passed from the stage, and had been replaced by songs with Italian words rendered by imported musicians, male and female, who demanded and received great sums in salaries. These introduced a new system of singing and stage-craft. The subjects of the operas were unfamiliar to the average person, and the whole became a 'cult' for a class who pretended delight rather than felt it.

It was then that the 'Beggar's Opera' struck a new note, a note that could be understood and enjoyed by a sane Englishman. Handel's Italian operas were in full swing, and his 'Admetus' and 'Richard I.' were being performed, when on the night of January 29, 1728, the Newgate pastor

first appeared on the boards. Gay probably felt that some explanation was due, so he prefaced it by a scene between the Beggar—the reputed author—and a Player. The Beggar states that it was 'originally writ for celebrating the marriage of James Chanter and Moll Lay, two most excellent ballad-singers.' By this the author prepares the audience for the popular song tunes and ballad airs which make up the musical portion of the piece.

It is quite true that Gay intended us to believe that he was having a 'touch' on the Italian opera, for the Beggar tells the Player that he has introduced certain similes 'that are in all your celebrated operas . . . besides I have a prison scene, which the ladies always reckon charmingly pathetick.' As to the parts I have observed such a nice impartiality to our two ladies that it is impossible for either of them to take offence.' This is evidently a good-natured hit at the quarrels between Faustina and Cuzzoni, the former having made her appearance as a rival to Cuzzoni in 1726. The allusion to 'the prison scene,' which the ladies find so 'pathetick,' is evidently based on a prison scene in Attilio's 'Coriolanus,' produced in 1723.

The immediate success and the lasting popularity of the 'Beggar's Opera' were due neither to political nor musical satire, but to the fact that it provided something that the ordinary person found he had long been deprived of—simple tunes that were familiar and agreeable to him, besides a sparkling and true picture of life. From time to time managers have had to prune some of its plain-speaking, but its essentials must have always remained. Almost every singer of note has from its first appearance in 1728 to the last (before the present revival) in 1886, studied one or other of the principal characters.

In modern remembrance Sims Reeves, in taking the part of Captain Macheath, would introduce such songs as 'Tom Bowling' and similar old English ditties—anachronisms justified only by Reeves' inimitable singing of such lyrics.

Gay sold the copyright of his 'Fables' and the 'Beggar's Opera' for something under a hundred pounds to John Watts and Jacob Tonson, the book-sellers. John Watts was a printer of plays and minor works near Lincoln's Inn Fields, with whom Benjamin Franklin had worked as journeyman. The press that in all probability struck off the sheets of the first edition may be seen in the South Kensington Museum.

My own copy of this scarce first edition now lies before me. It is an unpretentious little pamphlet in octavo of 58 pages, with an additional 16 pages of rudely-engraved music, being the treble of the airs. The printed date of the book is 1728.

The second edition, also dated 1728, has this music cut on wood blocks and inserted in the text, while for the first time the Overture is added. The third edition, dated 1729, is in quarto, with the music beautifully engraved on copper plates. After this editions of all dates are to be found with or without the music. A very notable edition of the music is 'The Excellent Choice,' being a 'Collection of the most Favourite Old Song-Tunes in the Beggar's Opera, set for 3 voices in the manner of Catches.' This was published by Walsh about 1740-50 in oblong folio.

At a later date Dr. Arne arranged the 'Beggar's Opera' for performance at the theatres, and set 'new basses to the songs.' This was published in oblong folio for the harpsichord by Longman & Broderip about 1780.

Dr. Pepusch probably had no hand in the selection of the tunes, but he set basses to them (which appeared in the third edition), and Dr. Burney remarks that he 'furnished the rude, wild, and often vulgar melodies with basses so excellent that no sound contrapuntist will ever attempt to alter them.' The Overture, which Pepusch composed, is upon the old air 'The Happy Clown':

One evening having lost my way,
which Lucy sings to words beginning:

I'm like a skiff on the ocean tost.

As to the sixty-nine tunes that were selected for Gay's verses—verses often rather puerile—a very great deal of interesting matter is available. I hope to deal with this in a second article.

MUTUAL ERROR

BY SYDNEY GREW

For fifty years past writers on musical matters have occupied their leisure in collecting mistakes made about music by novelists, poets, and non-musicians in general. The articles resulting from this have been mildly amusing, but rarely instructive; and I think the time would have been better employed if the plan had been to collect, not foolish things, but evidences of wisdom. In one unanticipated respect, however, this phase of musical criticism has been both amusing and instructive. It has demonstrated that writers may be ignorant even of matters strictly within their own province, and that musicians may accuse a non-musician of error which is no error.

I have not observed in general periodical literature any parallel writings on such a subject as 'Musicians and General Knowledge.' Were such work undertaken, those occupied in it would have a more ample supply of errors than musical writers have discerned: for it is a notable fact that the average musician is not well-informed concerning science, history, philosophy, and the rest, and that the average musical critic is on dangerous ground the moment he moves out of the path of his own art.

I give here a few instances of the errors of writers on music which parallel the errors made by novelists and poets. Several of these are errors within errors—errors made in correcting the (apparent) errors of others. My object is to afford consolation to non-musicians, and to assist the development of a desirable modesty in musical critics.

Milton is constantly chastised for his:

There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced quire below.

This, says the musician, is wrong; the organ is blown, but it certainly does not blow, and Milton was nodding Homericly. If, however, Milton is wrong also is Pope in his:

While in more lengthen'd notes and slow,
The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow;

and many other 17th and 18th century writers; also such highly-cultured 19th century men as Hawthorne, one of whose characters once 'blew a fitful note upon the organ.'

But there is no error here. Obeying a ceaseless law of language—the law of change—the word *blow* has lost certain significances, and we cannot now use it in Milton's way. Yet this is no excuse for the musical critic who pillories as error a contemporary

use of a word. His only excuse is ignorance, which is a poor plea, especially in the circumstances.

There are two explanations of this use of *blow*—one direct, the other indirect. The latter is that the word has the sense of *breathe*. Hear Pope again :

Descend, ye nine, descend and sing,
The breathing instruments inspire :

these instruments being trumpets and the like. The direct explanation is that formerly the word had the pure and compact significance of 'to sound with being blown.' In 'Paradise Lost' comes :

Nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow.

We are told in Joshua (vi. 4) that 'the priests shall blow with the trumpets.' We still say poetically, 'Let the trumpets sound,' and our expression is only one remove from the older, 'Let the trumpets blow.' What is right for the trumpet is right for the organ. Milton knew both English and music.

Another word which has been the cause of mistakes within mistake is *quaver*. I have seen instances of the 'misuse' of this word quoted from writers ranging from Addison to Thackeray. In every case, it seems to me, the context intimates a special meaning in the word, and a meaning no less concrete than that which attaches to it as a term of musical notation. Addison, for example, says: 'Whether we consider the instrument itself, or the several quavers and graces which are thrown into the playing of it.' And Lamb says that after practising 'God save the King' all his life, he had still not 'arrived within many quavers' of it. There is no need to analyse this 'error.' A use of the word by Bacon which I have noticed gives the clearest explanation: 'The division and quavering, which please so much in music, have an agreement with the glittering of light playing upon a wave.' (This dictum of Bacon's, by the by, is an argument of use to musical pictorialists.) In former times, the florid vocalists in Italian opera were called *quaverers*. Even to-day we say we are 'all of a quiver and quaver.'

After these two examples we can allow Charles Reade to describe a typical slow movement of the early 18th century as 'a sparkling *adagio*.' And when we learn that pre-Bach fugues often had a double-bar with repeat at the close of the first section of the piece (as is the case with a familiar canzona of Kerl), we can excuse Browning's :

Where is our gain at the Two-bars?

in his poem on the fugue ('Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha'), and cease to charge him with perverting fact for sake of rhyme.

In 1917, the editor of a musical periodical organized a competition on the subject 'Novelists' Blunders in Music.' He gave the prize to a competitor who attributed the forty-year old 'Mr. Barnes of New York' to 'Ouida.' If the competitor or the editor had been wiser than the novelists they laughed at, they would either have read this book first or have discovered that it was by A. C. Gunter. This sly would amuse literary readers of my imaginary essay on 'Musicians and their Blunders.' And medical readers would be interested in the pathological ideas of the musical critic who in 1920, out of an ardent desire to advocate the new music of to-day, brought out the sentence :

As Germany has become synonymous with a *sterile* tradition which I view as an artistic *cancer* . . .

There is honour for the man who can bring *sterile* and *cancer* together. This instance of the ignorance of musicians would appear twice in my supposed essay, the second time in the section devoted to mistakes about the simple meanings of words; because it presents the error that things can be synonymous, and not (as the non-musical would understand) words only.

But the finest catch of all which this literary fisherman might hope to get from the waters of musical criticism is the following (also written in 1920) :

. . . ordinary language is a fixed thing . . . a word is always the same word, and always means the same thing . . . whereas the same chord means a hundred different things according to how it is approached and quitted, and what its function is in a series of ideas.

There are some words with meanings so diverse as to become contradictory; all but simple concrete terms change in meaning generation by generation. Language, and literature also, may remain fixed in form, but never in significance, which is why religious texts and creeds suffer fresh interpretations from time to time; and the same word will mean a hundred different things according to how the writer uses it and according to its function in varying series of ideas. So little is the meaning of words fixed, that we have to read the old masters with a glossary and a new master of unusual type of mind with dictionary or analytical explanation.

Everything has its complements. There is a musical blunder made by the literary man but has a counterpart in a general blunder made by the musician. Yet neither need be discouraged: the fault proves their humanity.

CONCERTS AND CRITICS BY THOMAS MOULT

It is our custom, if we live away from a city, from a capital, to envy our more fortunate cousins and sigh for the time when we too shall be able to have at our beck and call all the arts and all the artists. But there is at least one critical observer freshly come to town who has very quickly realized that in music, at any rate, the fact of being able to choose between, say, half a dozen concerts in a single evening is not altogether an unmixed blessing. To bundle his invitation tickets into a hat and draw one of them out at random, this to suffice for a single evening, is to make a drastic clean-cut through the bewilderment; but it is the only method if he is to make any headway at all. Even then a large proportion of concerts worth attending is bound to be neglected, the odds being that important musical events will have clashed; but it is a better method than any other. For if on the one evening he is confronted by the announcement of half a dozen recitals whose principals are quite unknown to him and he dares to make a choice on the strength of the programme (his only method), he is pretty certain to find himself at a performance by one of those charmingly accomplished young soloists whose only ambition is to make at least one public appearance in the metropolis. It may matter a good deal to the critic with very little time to waste, but it matters nothing to these young soloists that the success is restricted to a sheaf of generous and unexacting press paragraphs so long as they get them. And if only their concerts are advertised in certain

of the morning papers, get them they will, as surely as they will receive during the actual performance the several bouquets of hot-house flowers presented ostentatiously by their admirers—or by themselves!

There has been a good deal of talk and protest of late in connection with this superabundance of recitals. One critic alleged that innumerable people who have no qualification whatever are appearing on the concert-platform, and he distributes blame heavily on agents, teachers, performers, and press alike. Another simplified the indictment by levelling his charge against the press alone, that refuses to condemn bad work. A third cast ridicule on the whole practice, remarking that though it was easy enough for the young recitalist to 'come out,' it was generally impossible for him to stay out, so that the position resolved itself! There was hardly one, however, who made the search, Herbert Spencer like, for the grain of virtue in an admitted evil, which must always be our primary aim in any sort of search. The discovery or non-discovery of any such virtue at the moment does not of itself invalidate or justify the Spencerian method. Should we not, for instance, regard these concerts as essential, forming the preliminary rounds of the competition for the favour of the more soundly musical parts of the country, the provinces? Are not Manchester and Birmingham, for instance, or Pittsburg and Boston, to be envied in that London and New York can make sure for them that only those performers will travel so far whose appearances signify the survival of the very fit?

Let us for a moment compare the position with that of literary criticism. If a critic of books were to spend whole columns nowadays in deplored the continued publication of fiction by certain popular illiterates, he would very justly be pilloried for his critical futility. Even were he to bewail the appearance of a huge mass of third- or fourth-rate novels, season after season since Fielding and Richardson set the fashion of novel-publication, those of his fellows who possessed only the rudiments of an historical sense would regard him as a critical ostrich. The presence of inferior work has long been accepted as an inevitable part of book-publication, and similarly if there is to be any representative public interpretation of music at all we must submit to this appalling multiplicity of concerts, and rely upon the continued operation of the law of survival.

Such a policy does not exclude, of course, the recognition of those various forms of abuse in the concert-world which are rightly being deplored. That there are agents whose one concern is to arrange concerts solely for their own twenty per cent, regardless of any artistic worth in their clients, and caring not at all whether that commission is filched from the public or the young performer; that there are unscrupulous teachers who use their pupils for advertising purposes of their own, and nothing else; that there are musicians who give a concert simply that they might gather together a few undiscriminating press cuttings and rush back to their native town—which is generally so proud of them that they never need to leave it again for the rest of their lives; and that there are newspapers which give a good notice to any recital advertised in their columns—all these abuses are only too apparent. But to condemn the whole recital system for such abuses is to condemn the whole system of book-publishing because there

are unscrupulous and tenth-rate publishers and writers.

There lies before us at this moment an accumulation of the programmes of concerts given in London during the first half of the present season. Admittedly they represent an appalling number. But it is plainly our duty to deal with them, so far as criticism is concerned, exactly as one would deal with a collection of new novels sent for review—mentioning those which are considered to have achieved a certain musical and artistic standard. Experience in criticism and innate generosity cause us to pass over the remainder in silence. And, taking it for granted that the critics already referred to will agree that concerts are not given merely for critics—in spite of many an appearance to the contrary—and that the comfort and convenience of critics are not necessarily the first consideration of concert performers and agents, we may justifiably ask by what alternative method can the younger and unknown artists show their capabilities before the music public? How else than by persuading a publisher to issue their novels can young writers make their work known at all?

And surely the means are justification of the end. However distasteful the admission may seem, it is through the effort of the despised agents that musicians have the opportunity for giving us that music which otherwise can only be heard by—duplicating the already existing organizations! The real fault of the agents is, of course, that they run their business on commercial lines, and that their discrimination is consequently a commercial one. Having experienced the irritation of it ourselves, we can enter into and sympathise with the feeling of the critic who spends half an evening crossing a city to a worthless but financially successful concert and half an evening in getting back again. But it is only through such arduous and endurances on his part that we are able to prove the worthlessness. The winnowing process is necessary, and why not in London and New York? Nor should the critic forget that however great his own worries might be, the young artist has undergone infinitely greater, and that the performance is the artist's critical moment, not the critic's. The remedy is that which has been applied through force of similar circumstances to book-reviewing: the number of reviewers was increased. But in the matter of music-criticism we touch now upon a much deeper problem—that of making music-education as universal and compulsory in its rudiments as reading has been these many years.

Ad Libitum

BY FESTE

A few months ago, discussing the question of popular music, I expressed the opinion that composers such as Bax, Ireland, Frank Bridge, and a dozen more of our representative men could turn out far better tunes and light music generally than do the little group of writers who seem to have the monopoly of that kind of work. The need for some fresh hands is glaringly obvious to those who care to sit through the music of an average revue, or who will examine any of the song annuals and other vocal works intended for consumption by the crowd. Not only are the tunes feeble and reminiscent; their harmonization and the laying out of the accompaniment is often ludicrously inept. I return to the subject because a particularly

flagrant example has just appeared. If the composer were a beginner I should refrain from mentioning his name. But as he is an old hand, and has received so much adulation as a writer of popular music, I see no reason why he should not be given a little frank criticism as a wholesome change. Indeed, he may welcome it. An excellent judge of publicity, he knows well that a slating is by no means a bad advertisement, especially as it is free.

I have long wondered at the vogue of Mr. Herman Darewski's music. After an examination of his latest song, 'The Return,' I marvel more than ever. He has so often given would-be composers of popular music advice as to song-writing that we may presume he knows what the public wants. It wants tune, swing, and rhythm, he tells us, and we agree. But in 'The Return' he gives the public neither. Instead he puts them off with a series of notes from which I quote the first few groups (I refrain from the use of such words as melody and phrases, for obvious reasons) :

Ex. 1.



There are four more such groups before we reach the refrain, and every one consists almost entirely of repeated quavers, with a rhythm exactly the same as in the quotation.

Many a song has achieved success solely by means of a catchy chorus. So generally recognised is the fact, that songwriters of this type often save themselves for the chorus, merely marking time during the song proper. So we approach Mr. Darewski's refrain with hope, almost with confidence, knowing that his hand is ever on the pulse of popular taste. But he is so sure that the public wants still more repeated quavers and a square-toed rhythm that he gives them another dose. There are six groups of notes here, two are exactly the same as the third and fourth in the quotation, and the rest are so like as to be hardly distinguishable. The refrain is ended with this graceful melodic sweep :



The second verse is an exact repetition, and by way of giving the alleged tune a good chance of soaking in, the refrain is sung twice. The accompaniment, both in harmonization and keyboard writing, is as bad as the voice part.

I may add that this is not a comic song—save unintentionally. On the contrary, it is a setting of some verses dealing with no less a topic than life beyond the grave. I do not quote the wishy-washy jingle because of the nature of the subject.

Now, there are some musical questions on which there can never be agreement. Because of this, we too easily yield to folk who tell us that it is impossible to label music as good or bad. It is,

they say, largely a matter of taste. The fact is, of course, we can almost as easily distinguish between good and bad tunes as between good and bad eggs. Sometimes, it is true, we come across a tune that is on the border line, just as we may meet with an egg that does nothing more than raise doubts. The one difference between the two commodities is that a tune may be good in parts, whereas a bad egg is bad all over—*pace* the hedging curate. As for the matter of taste, we know that a good many Londoners prefer an egg that has been in stock for some time—it is full-flavoured, whereas the egg that has just come to town strikes them as tame and insipid. This does not prove that an elderly egg is good; it merely shows that as a result of being cut off from regular supplies of fresh eggs their palate has become accustomed to the bad, and has lost its taste for the good.

Looking at the sample quoted above, and bearing in mind that the rest is well up—or rather down—to it, would you suppose that anybody could be found to say a good word for such a song? Of course you wouldn't. Nevertheless, such an one has been found, and her testimony is set forth prominently on the cover, so that he who reads may run and buy yet more copies.

Here we will pause for a moment and consider viscountesses. Run over in your mind all the viscountesses in your circle, take any fair average specimen and ask yourself a few questions. What kind of pictures does she hang on the walls of her drawing-room? Only the best, or good copies of the best. Her library? The shelves are full of good books, with perhaps a few that are at all events not bad. If she indulges in 'Heartsalve Novelettes' you may be sure that she does not advertise the fact. Rather does she read them privily, as the second drinker takes his nip, both novelette and bottle being kept out of sight. Her furniture is good to the eye and you may sit on it and in all other ways use it with comfort and safety. And so on; in all the things that really matter—cookery, dress, and what not, you look to your viscountess to show good sense and good taste. Only when you come to music do you feel that anything may happen, and that it may be found among the what-nots.

Now we get back to the song. The cover bears the following preface :

This beautiful song is undoubtedly an inspiration. It touches the heart at once with its tender words and appealing melody, breathing hope and consolation to all humanity in its mighty declaration. . . . It is undoubtedly destined to become an anthem of joy to many. . . .

It may or may not surprise you to hear that the considered opinion is signed by a viscountess. There in a nutshell is the reason why the musical life of our happy land is so chaotic. We have no standard. The lady who wrote the above would be horrified if asked to publish her approval of a book or picture, or play, or fur coat, or patent food so poor in idea and workmanship as Mr. Darewski's song. The book would go into the waste-paper basket, the coat back to the maker with a note very much to the point, and the patent food would find its way down the drain. But the song—ah! 'beautiful,' 'undoubtedly an inspiration,' 'appealing melody,' 'touches the heart,' 'an anthem of joy,' and so on, past all whooping.

I have taken up all this space dealing with a footling song and a no less footling judgment because it is high time we had a little plain speaking on the subject. Just lately the *Daily News* has been giving us a liberal dose of matter about Mr. Darewski, but it can rarely find space for more than a dozen lines concerning even the most important concerts. In no other matter does it regard its readers as semi-barbarians. Its literary columns, for example, are quite first-rate. I can count on almost daily reviews of the best new books—reviews which are well worth reading for their own sake, written as they are by such brilliant people as Rebecca West, Rose Macaulay, Robert Lynd, &c. Yet the public interested in good music is almost if not quite as large as that interested in good literature. So long as we musicians take no strong line in the matter, so long will our art be cold-shouldered and chivied by most of the press and made to look ridiculous by such people as Mr. Darewski and the Viscountess Molesworth. (I see no reason for withholding the lady's name. If she publishes abroad her judgment on a musical matter she cannot complain if it is reproduced in a musical journal.)

Have you noticed how some of these popular composers are lately giving themselves, and a certain patent medicine, a good deal of joint advertisement? Thus Mr. Horatio Nicholls, 'the famous composer,' tells us in large type that 'two numbers were desired by my publishers that would go one better than my successes, "The Kingdom within your Eyes" and "The Heart of a Rose." I was feeling equal to nothing, but through taking [let us call it Ju-Jah] 'the old inspiration returned with renewed health. The songs that I finished easily when—[now, then, altogether, JU-JAH!—had re-established me are: "I'd just Paint the Leaf of the Shamrock," and "That Old-fashioned Mother of Mine." Then comes a list of some of 'the famous composer's' successes.

I mention this cure because, looking again at 'The Return,' it seems to suggest that when Mr. Darewski wrote it he was feeling like Mr. Nicholls, 'equal to nothing.' Perhaps when he sees what it has done for another famous and jaded composer, he may try a few doses, and so induce the old inspiration to return.

I make haste to add that since the above was written the *Daily News* has given us a pleasant shock. As a result, no doubt, of due prodding by its excellent music critic, it celebrated the 150th anniversary of Beethoven's birth by giving us a leading article on the composer, and, on the same page, a symposium on his present position as a musical influence.

Does any reader know of a fairly recent book giving the specifications and other particulars of the principal organs in the British Isles—something after the style of the old Hopkins and Rimbault? A correspondent is anxious to obtain such a book. In view of recent developments in organ-building, a work of the kind is due, if not already in being.

One has to go away from home to hear news. I read in an American musical journal, dated November 13, an interview with Mr. Cecil Fanning,

the excellent baritone who gave us so much pleasure during the summer. Mr. Fanning, describing his London experience, says:

And German music! Why, the people are simply hungry for it. Two groups—and even whole programmes—of Lieder in the German language, are the rule on many London programmes.

I seem to remember that at the time of Mr. Fanning's visit an attempt to sing some German songs in the original language caused 'a certain liveliness' at a West End concert-hall. And 'two groups' and 'whole programmes' of such songs are not the rule even now, six months since Mr. Fanning's visit. I myself have been bursting to celebrate the Beethoven centenary by hearing my favourite 'Adelaide' sung in her own tongue wherein she was born; but so far no singer seems ready to oblige.

I wish Mr. Paul Howard would leave Adelaide and come to London. I am moved to this wish by a perusal of a set of programmes of fifteen pianoforte recitals he has recently given at the Town Hall of that lucky city. All the programmes are different, and they contain a lot of fine stuff we rarely or never hear in London. Moreover Mr. Howard writes some of the most enjoyable programme notes I have ever read. He is not pontifical or platitudinous, or any other of the things that programme annotators should not be but generally are. He simply talks to us about the music in an intimate and unconventional way. Here are a few plums:

I confess I don't care for Ravel's 'Barque on the Ocean,' but I continue with it because I have found so many who admire it.

The Pavane for a little girl is one of the immortals. The grief becoming gradually tinged with lofty resignation which is more elevated and healthy than the Marche Funèbre, which concludes with 'nevertheless he is dead.'

This Pavane was written for pianoforte, as I remarked to Mr. Verbruggen, who gave it here, but, as he said, it is a way these French composers have of arranging their compositions in a lot of different ways—for pianoforte, for violin and pianoforte, orchestra, &c. Franck, too, has done the same thing.

Friends Piastro and Mirovitch recommended to me Balakirev's 'Islaméy' as the most difficult work in existence for pianoforte. This Eastern piece of fanaticism, crazy hysteria, and smouldering Oriental passions certainly is a tyrant, but it is mostly only the madness of the pace that kills, and this can be met by direct action. Responding to the red-rag challenge of its impregnability I made a wild onslaught, got it down, and tried it off on visitors without copy within three weeks, although somewhat convulsed myself afterwards by its delirium. (Poor Balakirev—he finished up working in his old age as a railway clerk for 15s. per week.)

The 'Walzermasken,' however, defied conquest even after two years of daily battlement, and it is now nearly four years before I can claim maturity and pleasure in performance. Put against this the fact that I worked at Beethoven's Op. 2, No. 3, for the first time recently, memorized and polished it in a week, and achieved the same with 'Pathétique' in two days. That gives you just the ratio. . . .

And now 'Satire,' of what? The spirit of satire and in the next 'Kankatur,' assail pedantry and everything else, and yet make beautiful music. 'Oh, well, of course,' you may say. Not so fast, however; look at the score and see what is there and how it is handled to make it what it is instead of a sepulchre. If old Albrechtsberger might rise to hear them he would doubtless drop dead again. . . .

Schumann must have been an awfully jolly German. He facetiously introduces a few bars of the 'Marseillaise' in his bantering Carnival Prank from Vienna, composed about 1839, when the tune was forbidden in Berlin.

Many years ago, when I had long been using this Fugue [one in A minor, by Bach] as a daily exercise without producing the liquid effect I desired, one night in my sleep, or on the borderland thereof, ghostly hands appeared before me on a keyboard and played the Fugue with inexpressible facility, like a murmuring of spring breezes, with nuances caressing and softening its fugal lines, and making it a thing of beauty most ineffably sweet. After this one lesson which I shall never forget, the hands appeared no more.

Rachmaninoff's Preludes are very beautiful, and many of them very advanced. There is one book alone containing twenty-four masterpieces by this title, but the public have got hold of the first one in C sharp minor, and they can't see past it. They call it 'Rachmaninoff's Prelude.' Every Russian composer writes a prelude every five minutes, just as in our land we read a tract, have an ice cream or liqueur, or smoke a cigar.

Liajow's Biroulki are most exquisitely sweet, seemingly a succession of children's little games, each one quite naive and entrancing—I have five beautiful children, so of course I ought to know.

Scriabin, who by the stupid mismanagement of fate died in 1915 from the results of a wasp bite on the nose, was a leading light of the great Russian school. He started at about the age of twelve composing books of Etudes (Op. 8) that are now standard répertoire of great artists, being then Chopin and Schumann-esque: about the age of nineteen he was passing through his Lisztian influences (Allegro de concert epoch), and in his Olympian stride walked right into to-morrow, and beyond the comprehension of any living creature. Goodness knows where he would be now if that wasp had not got him.

In a letter accompanying these programmes Mr. Howard tells me that Godowsky's works are wonderful and ought to be better known. It's up to our pianoforte recitalists to follow the gallant lead of the Antipodes.

Mr. Howard's business circular contains a delightful touch. A long list of newspaper eulogies is headed 'Press Admissions.' *Admissions!* But I have a crow to pluck with him on another matter. Elsewhere in this circular the *Musical Times* is quoted, and described as 'probably the oldest and most conservative musical journal in the world.' To the charge of great age we plead guilty (we hope Paul will himself be as old and hearty some day), but we try to be no more than reasonably conservative. After all, we show distinct symptoms of radicalism by approving of Paul's programmes, and even more by refusing to be shocked at his annotations.

As a study in contrasts, read Mr. Howard's notes and go straight on to this extract from a concert notice in the *Chicago Tribune*:

THE SPLENDOUR THAT IS MARY GARDEN
REVEALED AGAIN
BY RUTH MILLER

Mary Garden's art is like a tongue of flame upleaping, hypnotic in its thousand tantalizing, shifting values, perfect in its gorgeous, flaunting beauty, and superb in the breathtaking way it catches those puny ineffectual souls near it in its inescapable fire, and in passing leaves

them vivid tinder, glowing with a reflected brilliance. Her tone is like that, too, changing from the thrill of tortured passion to the gentle cooing of a lullaby, even as the deep, ruddy heart of burning slips into the vague, tenuous smoke mist which clings about its iridescent, quivering edges.

Yesterday at the Auditorium Miss Garden was more than a slim, beautiful woman in a startling dress of violet greenness with a scarlet flower caught like some strange, monstrous butterfly on the hip; more than a daring, charming personality whose adorable friendliness years of artistic supremacy and adulation have failed to tarnish with smugness or condescension; and more than an audacious, shrewd show-woman; she was a great musician, earnest, sincere, and absolute in her amazing artistry.

Incidentally, Miss Garden was in unusually good voice, and sang the Gismonda air in a manner to satisfy even the determined vocal quibblers. And no matter what one's operatic affiliations may be, one never leaves a performance of that lovable woman, great mind, and uncanny understanding that is Miss Garden without thinking that either this vivid artist never does anything she cannot do or else there is nothing impossible to her accomplishment.

Stout work with a fountain pen, this, though at first sight I was not sure whether the strange monstrous butterfly was caught on its own hip (as any one of us is likely to be in an unguarded moment) or on somebody else's. Still, I prefer Paul to Ruth all the time, though (or because) he is far, far less eloquent.

I am asked to announce that the Contemporary music centre of the British Music Society will hold its first meeting on January 28, when some new and unfamiliar native works will be performed. The committee is ready to consider MSS. with a view to performance at such meetings. The hon. secretary is Mr. Philip Wilson, 19, Berners Street, W.I. MSS. for possible performance on January 28 should reach Mr. Wilson before January 5.

Mr. John Gerrard Williams has scored his delightful pianoforte suite, 'Pot-Pourri,' for full orchestra. I am glad to hear that there is a likelihood of its being played at Queen's Hall by the L.S.O. early in the year.

It is officially announced that the Three Choirs Festival next year will be held at Hereford on September 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

PRIZE COMPETITIONS

The proprietors of the *School Music Review* and the *Musical Times* announce that the two prizes of twelve guineas each for the best unison school song and the best two-part school song have been awarded respectively to Mr. A. Rowley, 11, St. Paul's Road, Richmond, and to Dr. G. Tootell, 59, Avenue Parade, Accrington.

The judges report that the 'standard of the competition was very disappointing, very few of the 153 songs submitted revealing any knowledge of the requirements of a school song or any skill in the composition of music.'

New Music.

BY WILLIAM CHILD

SONGS

The eleventh and twelfth sets of Parry's 'English Lyrics' (Novello) have just been issued. The whole collection comprises seventy songs. Is there any other set in the language of the same size and excellence? Thinking of the best of them, such as 'Love is a Bable,' 'And yet I love her,' 'Proud Maisie,' 'From a City Window,' and about a dozen others, one feels that here, and in the pick of the choral works, is the stuff that will endure. At present, Parry the composer is perhaps under a shadow—a shadow partly cast by Parry the man. It needs no great daring to prophesy that in ten years' time some of the best of his choral works will be rediscovered—in a few cases we may drop the 're'—and the cream of the 'English Lyrics' once more appear on the programmes of singers who just now are apparently able to discover merit in nothing but the very new or the very old. As I understand Parry's work in this field will shortly be discussed at length in the *Musical Times*, I need do no more now than merely draw attention to the publication of his last efforts.

Sydney Rosenbloom has shown such pronounced talent as a composer for pianoforte that I took up his 'Four Songs' (Winthrop Rogers) with keen interest. Let the unpleasant truth be told at once: I laid them down with disappointment. The composer gives us a jar at the very beginning. He writes a simple diatonic introduction to Drayton's 'Daffadill,' and spoils it by dragging in a hackneyed minor 9th cadence that is quite out of the picture. Later in the song he repeats words for no other reason, apparently, than to make things eke out. 'Give a man a horse he can ride' pulls up badly at the start by an inane repetition—'And his rank and wealth, his strength and health, his strength and his health'—a passage even worse treated when it recurs in the unnecessary harking back to the first verse at the end of the song. Mr. Rosenbloom must try again. There is a good deal more in song-writing than giving the voice a tune and backing it up with a pianoforte part. And if the text is short, we must be careful how we lay hands on it for the purpose of making a fairly long song of it. In ninety-nine times out of a hundred it is best left short.

A good example of a brief song is H. V. Jervis Read's 'Day Dream' (Winthrop Rogers), a setting of a nine-lined poem of Shelley. Not a word is repeated, yet there is no feeling of insignificance. Short as the song is the composer contrives to give us a melodic line both broad and expressive, though simple. The accompaniment is mainly chordal, and the harmony of appropriate warmth. This is one of the most immediately attractive little songs I have seen for some time. In style it recalls Quilter's 'Now sleeps the crimson petal.'

Another excellent little song is W. McNaught's 'Dancing at the Lurgan' (Novello). The words have a quasi-humorous flavour, and Mr. McNaught handles them with the right light touch. The rhythmic scheme is refreshingly free, and there are some effective harmonic strokes.

Regarding the ballad as the vocal equivalent of instrumental light music, we need not affect a

superior air in dealing with it. It is a pity, however, that composers so frequently reproduce in their music the jog trot of the verses turned out for songs of the kind. A simple, even reminiscent, melody and the plainest of accompaniments can be made tolerable, if not enjoyable, by the lengthening of an occasional note or by the use of an extra bar. Here, for example, is Leonard J. Walker's 'There's a pathway through the heather' (Novello), with a nice singable tune of a familiar type and a rhythm that from the first bar to the last is as unenterprising as the pattern on a wall-paper. The weakness is emphasised by the accompaniment, which consists almost entirely of repeated chords. It may be argued that the large public that likes this sort of song will not worry in the least about these deficiencies; they will enjoy the tune and the sentiment of the words. True, but they would enjoy both not a scrap less if the composer had not been afraid of adding a few musicianly and original touches, and the song would have appealed to a wider public. Why not tap two sets of customers when it can be done by a little forethought? A. Herbert Brewer's 'On wings of delight' (Novello) also belongs to the ballad family. The words are typical Locktongue, the melody does nothing unexpected, and the key scheme oscillates mainly between tonic and dominant. Yet the neatly written accompaniment contains sufficient individuality to lift the song on to a higher plane than that of the average ballad.

A good example of what can be done with a simple melody and a few bold progressions is Julius Harrison's 'Foc'sle Jack' (Enoch), a capital song that has the directness the subject demands, plus an amount of musical interest that a few years ago would have been regarded as out of place in a song of the type. This upward tendency is even more marked in John R. Heath's 'Cherry Time' (Enoch). Here is a delightful song, full of point and interest, and yet readily grasped by the average hearer. The accompaniment calls for neat playing.

Reginald Steggall's 'Lullaby' (Novello) is a trifle longer than a lullaby should be, and is perhaps over-elaborate in its pianoforte part—which is a pity, for it contains some beautiful music. F. Bennicke Hart's setting of Blake's 'The Shepherd' (Elkin) is another example of a song just missing the spot through lack of simplicity. The composer's name is new to me. Judging from this effort he (or she) will do some notable song-writing. The simple parts of 'The Shepherd,' especially the closing bars, are charming. Even the most experienced of composers err sometimes in this matter of being sophisticated in the wrong place. How came John Ireland to lay such violent hands on the beautiful old ballad of 'The Three Ravens'? (Winthrop Rogers). On the credit side may be set his setting of Aldous Huxley's 'The Trellis' (Augener), a beautiful piece of work, with a warmth of expression that Mr. Ireland uses rather too sparingly as a rule. Another convincing song of a very different type is Josef Holbrooke's 'Come not when I am dead' (Enoch). It is finely dramatic—one of the best of modern lyrics. If I were an American I should say it was a song with a punch to it.

'Humpty Dumpty and other Songs' with music by Joseph Moorat, and some delightful drawings by Paul Woodroffe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), is rather out of our reviewing beat, but so excellent a gift-book having been sent for notice, cannot fairly be passed over, especially during the festive season.

PIANOFORTE

The child of to-day is well looked after in the way of pianoforte music. In place of the dry sonatinas with which most of us wrestled he is given well-written little pieces with an attractive title or programme. Moreover, whereas you and I were kept in a very narrow harmonic path, with plain chords and inversions, our progeny may enjoy such luxuries as unresolved dissonances, and a good many of the fashionable chords with pimples on them. Here for example is the second book of Cyril Scott's 'Young Hearts' (Elkin), five little pieces besprinkled with Cyrilscottisms in tabloid form. There is a good deal to be said in favour of thus training the young mind to follow music in which the unexpected is likely to happen. It need hardly be said that from a finger technique point of view Mr. Scott's pieces are excellent. Less eccentric, but containing a good deal of harmonic interest, and also well written, are J. D. Davis' 'Four Little Pieces for Young Players' (Novello). There is some capital work for the left hand in various ways, though the fact is well-disguised by the attractiveness of the music. That Adam Carse also has the knack of turning out good material of this kind is shown by his 'Sheaf of Little Dances' (Augener), though the harmonic interest is less than in the Scott and Davis' pieces.

A very attractive work for good players is Anthony Bernard's 'Hill Tune with Variations' (Winthrop Rogers). The tune is in folk-song style, but the treatment is modern. Its alternation of simplicity, intimate feeling, and rough vigour, as well as the unconventional treatment of the theme, make it a refreshing change from the usual run of works in variation form. It is to be hoped that one of our recitalists will discover it.

Cecil Baumer's 'Danse des Negrillons' (Elkin) is a good example of salon music, brilliant and not distressingly original. Nor do Algernon Ashton's Eight Studies (Augener) say anything that has not been said by the study-writers of long ago, though the fact will be a recommendation to some teachers who prefer that technical material shall more or less stick to its job, and not go running after such strange gods as novelty or emotion. From Augener's comes a fingered and well-printed edition of Liszt's 'Rhapsodie Espagnole.' Glière, like most Russians, has the knack of writing short pieces. His set of ten, Op. 31, have been published in album form by Chester—a very attractive collection, of moderate difficulty.

Jaques-Dalcroze is so associated with a kind of glorified musical drill that his gifts as a composer are perhaps overlooked. His Twenty Caprices and Rhythmic Studies (Augener) show his ability to handle with ease and effect all kinds of harmonic and rhythmic complexities. Not often do we find the modern idiom so well used in pianoforte writing as here. A footnote says: 'These pieces require an interpretation strictly in conformity with the composer's precise indications. The performer is therefore requested to abandon in this special case the *rubato* so dear to pianists.' Can you see that *rubato* being abandoned? The composer gives us something new in the way of time-signature. Instead of inserting figures in the stave, he puts above the beginning of the bar, a number and the unit, thus: 10/4. As changes of time are frequent, this method is rather bothering, though it as the

advantage of saving the notation from a good many interruptions.

Joseph Jongen has many admirers in this country, and his latest work for pianoforte, a 'Suite en forme de Sonate' (Chester), should increase the number. There are four movements, 'Sonatine,' 'La Nieg sur la fagne,' 'Menuet-Danse,' and 'Rondeau.' Particularly attractive are the third and fourth, but the whole is a happy example of the composer's blend of intimate feeling, delicate colour, and admirable keyboard writing.

Josef Holbrooke's Valse 'Coromanthe,' for pianoforte duet (Chester), is a moderately difficult go-ahead affair. It is marked Opus 18. According to Mr. Lowe's book on the composer, Op. 18 is a pair of Suites for pianoforte solo, none of the items bearing the title of this duet—so where are we? Its early date is shown by its comparatively simple character.

The editing or arranging of old keyboard music calls for a good deal of courage as well as taste. It is so easy to leave the text alone, and perhaps even easier to overdo the amplifying. Alfred Moffatt has shown a judicious hand in his treatment of 'Four old French Harpsichord Pieces' (Novello). The composers drawn on are Saint-Amans, Rameau, Chedeville, and our old friend 'Anon.' Mr. Moffatt has managed to make the music pianistic without destroying the slight texture of the original, the result being a set of pieces of unusual charm. He has wisely added fingering, so that they may well be given to fairly advanced pupils.

ORGAN

Two pieces similar in title but widely different in method are J. A. Sowerbutts' 'Lament' and George J. Bennett's Elegiac Prelude (Novello). Mr. Sowerbutts expresses himself by means of a cantilène piece, a type that has its pitfalls, because of the ease with which the modern organ can be made to disguise poor accompanimental writing and other forms of debility. This 'Lament' needs the minimum of help from the organ-builder, because it has a real well-sustained tune and an accompaniment full of interest both in texture and harmony. Especially effective is the return of the main theme in the tenor. Modern organ music that is expressive without sloppiness and original without eccentricity is not so common as it ought to be, so Mr. Sowerbutts' piece is the more welcome.

Dr. Bennett's Elegiac Prelude is in a broader and more markedly funeral style, and therefore well fitted for use as a voluntary on any solemn occasion. It has an effective quicker section half-way through, with a good climax, and a very expressive close. Another piece of a serious cast is C. Villiers Stanford's 'In Modo Dorico' (Stainer & Bell), arranged from a pianoforte piece, and containing material used also in the Prelude to the composer's opera, 'The Travelling Companion.' The mode is strictly adhered to save for a few bars, and even then the character of the piece is not materially affected. The movement begins quietly, and gradually works up to an imposing end.

Gustave Ferrari's Intermezzo (Musette), Solemn March, and Fantasy on French Folk-Songs (H. W. Gray : Novello) are three excellent works. The Fantasy is especially attractive, despite the fact of the composer treating so many themes that he has no time to develop them sufficiently, the result being slightly disjunct. But the subjects are so delightful, and so well treated, that nobody is likely to be

bothered by considerations of structure. The folksong with which the piece ends—'En passant par la Lorraine'—quite takes one captive, especially when the drums (low 4ths on the pedal 32-ft.) are added.

Marcel Dupré's Three Preludes and Fugues (Leduc), Scherzo (Leduc), and Fifteen Versets (Novello), call for more space than is now at my disposal, so a review of them must be deferred till next month.

rich and vivid even when the music is expressive of the darker feeling. 'The Garden of Fand' is a comparatively early work; that is to say—for we move rapidly nowadays—it is about eight years old. Since then Mr. Bax's personality has developed, and with it, a gift of saying what he means more clearly and with apparently less expenditure of effort. Fand is, in Celtic legend, the Queen of the Sea, who, like Circe, lured mortals to their doom. The central section, which describes the revels of the Queen's Court, has some fine moments, and the suggestion of the undulating rhythm of the sea is very imaginatively brought home to us. At the same time a little pruning would benefit the work.

His orchestral tone-poem, 'November Woods,' which was heard at the Hallé concert on November 18, was played for the first time in London at the Philharmonic concert under Mr. Hamilton Harty on December 16.

'November Woods' dates about five years later than 'The Garden of Fand,' and shows the composer to have reached a further stage in his development. It is more closely knit, more lucid, and has less trace of effort. It seems to be more inevitably right. The climaxes and contrasts are more effective, because they seem to come from within. The programme is a psychological one, dealing with inner experiences which all of us may share. There is great mastery of orchestral colour, and it is highly individual. In the middle section, where happy memories contrast with the gloom of the November wood, the composer reaches a high level of imagination and inspiration, and there is a bigness in the music which he does not always achieve.

Mr. Hamilton Harty conducted with sympathy and enthusiasm, and the Philharmonic Orchestra played very finely. Excellent, too, was its playing of Mr. Harty's own skillful and discreet arrangement of Handel's 'Water Music' and of Tchaikovsky's fifth Symphony. December 16 was the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Beethoven's birth, so the 'Coriolan' Overture was included in the programme—a not too generous tribute to Beethoven.

The rest of the programme was devoted to unaccompanied singing by the Philharmonic Choir, under Mr. Kennedy Scott. The Choir has made great strides since last year. In quality of tone, clearness of attack, and variety of expression the difference is remarkable. The singing of the music of Sweelinck, Praetorius, Calvisius, and Orlando Gibbons was very human and expressive, and the clearness of the part-singing was admirable. Equally good was the singing of Dr. Vaughan Williams' five arrangements of English Folk-Songs. They are exceedingly clever, and only a few times does the composer allow his skill in the making of choral effect to obscure the simple beauty of the tunes. The Wassail Song, humorous both in words and music, is the happiest of all, and it had to be repeated.

At the third of the concerts of the London Symphony Orchestra, on November 29, the programme contained an unfamiliar but very charming 'Suite Française' of Roger Ducasse, Scriabin's 'Divine Poem,' in which Mr. Coates scored one of his sensational successes, and d'Albert's Violoncello Concerto, which we could well have spared. If it were a really fine work, the composer's hobby of belching forth abuse upon this country would not matter, but as it is particularly dull, even Madame Suggia's magnificent playing could not redeem it. She is a very great artist, but she some-

London Concerts

BY ALFRED KALISCH

It has so happened that during the last few weeks we have had exceptional opportunities for making up our minds concerning two of our most prominent composers. The London Symphony Orchestra played Dr. Vaughan Williams' 'London' Symphony on December 6, and the Bach Choir played and sang his 'Sea' Symphony on December 14. We heard Mr. Arnold Bax's 'Garden of Fand' played by the British Symphony Orchestra on December 11, and on December 16 his 'November Woods.' Both were new to London.

It is characteristic of things in general in this country that neither of Dr. Vaughan Williams' works had before this been included in any regular series of concerts, though both had been heard on special occasions. It was a little unfortunate that the 'London' Symphony should have appeared in the same programme as Brahms' Violin Concerto. The musical digestion that can assimilate both in one evening is of abnormal strength.

The two Symphonies taken together reveal Dr. Vaughan Williams as a composer of great mastery in dealing with larger forms, with a dignified style and lofty ideals, and a certain vein of austerity which might lead him to undervalue the quality of charm were it not for the Celtic blood in him. All this we knew before.

Comparisons are odious, but to the present writer the 'Sea' Symphony appeals more strongly, for it makes a more decided impression of going on in obedience to an inner impulse. The massive climax of the first movement, the energy of the *Scherzo*—in places it stings like hail driven by a North-Easter—and the variety of choral effects will make the work memorable. The 'London' Symphony represents the views of a Londoner more intellectual and less emotional than the types imagined by other composers who have tried to illustrate the life of the great city in music. Though intellectual, it is not by any means cerebral. There is a fine vein of high emotion running through it all. Here, too, the *Scherzo* is the movement which at first makes the strongest impression, but the effect of the poetical and meditative endings of more than one of the movements makes a most lasting impression. It is a pity that our language has no terser way of expressing the distinction between the German momentary 'Effekt' and the lasting 'Wirkung.'

Mr. Bax is a musician of a totally different type. He is, above all, a poet whose mind revels in fantastic and romantic images. If we may call Dr. Vaughan Williams' music intellectual with a vein of poetry running through it, we may say of Mr. Bax's that we have poetry restrained from fantastic excess by a strong intelligence. His orchestral colour is always

times comports herself rather as if she were Madame Karsavina miming the actions of a 'cellist. When she was playing Saint-Saëns' Concerto at the British Symphony Orchestra referred to above, her exuberance of gesture resulted in her dropping her bow at a crucial moment. She would be a still greater artist if she did not do these things.

The novelty at the London Symphony Orchestra was the 'Magic Cauldron' by Mr. Cyril Jenkins, a symphonic poem based on a Welsh legend full of love and hate and lust of battle. Mr. Jenkins writes fluently and easily, with a keen sense of picturesque orchestral colour and a knack of inventing well-marked themes. He has a dramatic sense which is characteristic of his native country. It is satisfactory to find at least one composer from Wales whose works do not date from 1860 or thereabouts, and one who is able to be an effectual propagandist for his advanced views.

At the Queen's Hall Symphony concert on November 20 the novelty was Casella's symphonic poem 'Italia.' It falls into two parts, the first inspired by gloomy existence in the sulphur mines of Sicily, the second by popular merry-making at Naples. The composer extracts the last ounce of effect out of the contrast, and makes good use of a popular tune with a strange Oriental flavour. There are many orchestral pictures of Southern gaiety, but this is distinctive by reason of the added note of brutality. Like Strauss in the last movement of 'Aus Italien' he makes use of Denza's tune 'Funiculì funiculà.' The music is modern, but not so aggressively dissonant as that of Malipiero and his followers, and its extraordinary vitality makes it good to hear.

To the record of the fourth London Symphony concert on December 6, must be added a few words of praise of Mr. Kochanski's manly yet sensitive playing of Brahms' Concerto. Mr. Coates, however, seemed anxious to make it more romantic than the soloist, and they did not appear to be altogether comfortable with each other.

At the second Philharmonic Concert, on November 25, the principal interest centred round Heifetz's playing of Elgar's Violin Concerto. It was not surprising that technically it should have been a marvellous achievement: one cannot recall a performance more consistently beautiful in tone and more facile. What did surprise us somewhat was the keenness of musical intelligence which the artist displayed; but nevertheless he fell short in the emotional and imaginative side of the interpretation. The slow movement in particular suffered from this defect. The interesting suggestion was made that the fault lay in M. Heifetz's un-English outlook on music. A comparison with Mr. Albert Sammons' performance of the same work supports this view: but the ideal playing of Kreisler pleads strongly on the other side. The performance aroused enormous enthusiasm, and Sir Edward Elgar, Mr. Coates, and M. Heifetz had to bow their acknowledgments many times. On December 4 Mr. Robert Newman gave his annual concert at Queen's Hall. The programme was entirely familiar, the most memorable moments being when M. Cortot played some of Debussy's Etudes.

Before leaving orchestral concerts, a few words should be spared to record the successful start made on December 9 by the Strolling Players' Orchestra, now said to be the largest amateur orchestra in

England. Mr. Joseph Ivimey has worked it up to a high pitch of excellence.

CHAMBER MUSIC

At the concert of the London Chamber Concert Society on November 23, Mr. Florent Schmitt played the pianoforte part of his new Violin Sonata with Mr. Defauw at Wigmore Hall. The title of the Sonata is curious, 'Sonate Libre en deux parties enchaînées.' One might begin by questioning whether a 'Sonata' could be 'free,' because the very word 'sonata' suggests obedience to certain rules. This does not imply any question of a composer's right to employ any kind of form he likes, only, if he does do so, why call it a Sonata in this case? There is another reason for the use of the title, which is explained by the Latin motto following them, *Ad modum clementis aquæ*, which being interpreted is 'After the manner of gently flowing water.' Now, the Sonata is, if anything, rather turbulent, but the key to the riddle is that *Clementis aquæ* is the translation of the name of M. Clemenceau. M. Clemenceau edited a paper called *L'Homme Libre*, and when that was suppressed started another which was called *L'Homme Enchaîné*. Whether the Sonata has or has not been inspired by the character of the 'Tiger' Mr. Schmitt has not divulged. This however is by the way. The Sonata is a very long and involved work. Its principal themes promise well, but in treating them the composer relapses into violence and obscurity. There is a constant feeling that the two instruments, instead of working harmoniously to a common end, are desperately fighting for supremacy all the time. Perhaps this is Clemenceau. It could not be said that the Sonata gained more than a 'succès d'estime.' At the same concert the Allied String Quartet gave an excellent performance of Ravel's String Quartet.

At Steinway Hall, on November 29, Mr. Leopold Ashton and Mr. Albert Cazabon gave a refined and thoughtful performance of Pierre de Bréville's Violin Sonata in C sharp minor. It is a scholarly but not striking work. The whole programme was un-hackneyed and interesting.

The most notable feature of the other concert of the same Society was the performance of Mr. Felix Salmond and Mr. Harold Craxton of the Violoncello Sonata of Jean Huré. This is a remarkably distinguished piece of work. It is melodious and lucid, it has a modern spirit, and its atmosphere is one of great charm. It should become the most popular of recent 'cello sonatas. The same two artists played at the concert of Miss Gertrude Blomfield (who still further established her claim to be one of our best concert singers) the Violoncello Concerto of Rachmaninov, an effective and agreeable work, but without the distinctive qualities of the French example.

An interesting feature of the autumn has been the violoncello recitals of Mr. Joseph Salmon, who drew exclusively on his own arrangements of the music of old masters. He has disinterred much music of great value; his arrangements are singularly skilful and tasteful, and his playing of music of these styles is full of vitality while maintaining the dignity of the classical manner. He does, however, now and then bring a little modern sentiment into his interpretations of some of the slow movements.

There has been a good deal of activity in quartet playing. The work done by the Meredith Quartet

is notably musicianly and refined. The Lucas Quartet (also a quartet of ladies) has intimate charm, and the Spencer Dyke Quartet and the London Trio have also done good work.

PIANISTS AND VIOLINISTS

In the sphere of pianoforte playing the outstanding events have been the Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt recitals of M. Cortot, the only regrettable feature, about which is that Wigmore Hall is really too small for the audiences. Nothing new can with advantage be said about his remarkable playing, nor need anything be added to what has been said so often about Mr. Lamond's Beethoven recitals. Mr. Hoffmann's popularity is speedily growing, and it is satisfactory to know that when he returns to us in the summer he will be heard with orchestra. Mr. Rubinstein has continued to gain favour, and his playing of sonatas with M. Kochanski showed that he has deeper musical qualities than those required of a brilliant soloist. One of the most interesting pianoforte recitals has been that of music for two pianofortes given on December 4 by Miss Irene Scharrer and Miss Myra Hess, whose unanimity of style is remarkable. They played among other things an arrangement of 'Après-midi d'un Faune,' an interesting experiment, not altogether successful in spite of the excellence of the performance. As I was at Kingsway Hall at that moment, I have to rely on the authority of a trustworthy friend. Miss Winifred Christie has earned a high place for herself among pianists in the United States. She has given an orchestral concert and a recital, and her well-balanced lucid style and finished technique should make a wide appeal. There should always be room for such musicianly playing.

Among many violinists who have given recitals, the most interesting, perhaps, has been M. Kochanski, whose sterling musical qualities and absence of sensational methods deserve very high praise. The new pieces of Szymanowsky, which he played, are full of charm. Mr. Louis Godowsky is a young violinist whose great promise has many times been mentioned. His performance of the Elgar Concerto at his own recital is the best thing he has done so far. He also played some graceful and effective little pieces of his own.

At their recital on November 26, Misses Christabel Baxendale and Doris Salmon gave a thoughtful and sensitive performance of Elgar's Sonata, and both played solos in a very musicianly way.

M. Mischel Cherniavsky, who was once a prodigy, is now a mature artist. He gave an orchestral concert at Queen's Hall on December 15, and played the Concerto in D of Haydn and Saint-Saëns' Concerto in D minor. He is a 'cellist of distinction, with a natural style and broad technique, and a singularly sympathetic if not powerful tone.

SINGERS AND SINGING

The most interesting of the new singers who have appeared is Madame Salteni-Mochi. She is as good an example as has been heard for some time of real *bel canto*. With her, vocal technique is not an end in itself, but a means to an end, that end being variety of expression. Her Bach singing is remarkable not only for its accuracy in florid passages, but for her sense of style, and her interpretation of Lieder is excellent. We have heard in the past so much declamatory singing of Hugo Wolf, that it is a comfort to hear his songs really sung. I was particularly interested in her singing of 'Tre Giorni son che Nina.' There are

two ways of reading it: the grimly humorous and melancholy. I have always thought the first way the right one, but Madame Salteni-Mochi's singing of it in an almost tragic vein nearly converted me to the other view. Mr. Gervase Elwes gave a notable recital previous to his departure for America.

Miss Leila Megane, who made a successful first appearance at Covent Garden in 1919 and has since then been singing in opera at Paris, has given a vocal recital which augurs well for her future. She has quite exceptional gifts of voice with the temperament expected from a Welsh singer. In the present dearth of contraltos of the first rank she should have an admirable chance of going very far. Miss Judith Litante's vocal recital should also be mentioned, as she is making rapid progress.

After a considerable interval Mr. Roland Jackson was heard again at Wigmore Hall. His pleasing voice and refined style are as good to listen to as ever; and he has a nice taste in the making of a programme.

There have been two more public rehearsals of the R.C.M. Patron's Fund. The most interesting of the works heard was L. A. Collingwood's 'Excerpts from "Macbeth,"' for mezzo-soprano, baritone, and orchestra.'

SOME NOTES FOR JANUARY

At the time of writing it seems as though the Christmas lull would last a little longer than usual, at any rate so far as important series of concerts are concerned. At the Philharmonic concert on January 27, with Mr. Albert Coates conducting, Miss Murray Lambert will play Mr. Hamilton Harty's Violin Concerto, and Respighi's 'The Fountain of Rome' will be in the programme. The first appearance here of M. Prokofiev, who will play the solo part in his own Pianoforte Concerto at the London Symphony concert on January 17, should cause some sensation if preliminary reports on the work are to be believed.

We are also promised a series of orchestral concerts conducted by M. Kussevitzky. He will be remembered as the pioneer conductor who gave a series of concerts on house-boats on the rivers of Russia, and thus made orchestral music accessible in places where it had never been heard before.

MARCEL DUPRÉ'S CONCERT

The Albert Hall was crowded on December 9, when this well-known organist gave a concert with the London Gregorian Association, in aid of the funds of the Officers' Association. Among the audience were the Prince of Wales, Princess Mary, and Earl Haig. Captain Francis Burgess conducted, and Mr. Herrick Edwards accompanied on a Positif organ. M. Dupré played Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, d'Aquin's 'Noel' with variations, the first movement of Widor's fifth Symphony, his own Prelude and Fugue in G minor, and Fifteen Versets. He also improvised between portions of psalms and hymns sung by the choir. A player of great brilliance and resource, M. Dupré was heard at his best in the Bach fugue and in the more dashing of his own versets and improvisations. He was strangely slow in the Bach Fantasia and, apparently, far too fast in his own Prelude and Fugue. Both in the style of the improvisation and in the registration schemes as a whole, there was a good deal that jarred with English ideas as to what is fitting at a Church service. Those of the audience who wisely began by accepting the necessary new point of view found the performance thoroughly stimulating. One

unfortunate result of the prevailing brilliance and frequent *bizarrie* of the organ playing was to make the choir sound dull. A little dynamic variety on their part would have been a great relief. Is there any sound reason why plainsong should be sung *mezzo-forte* all the time, regardless of the varying sentiment of the psalm or hymn? If such a level style is the correct tradition, so much the worse for tradition. However, perhaps the method had hardly a fair chance on this occasion, owing to the character of the organ interludes. We hope M. Dupré will visit us again. Perhaps he might be induced to show us that the Queen's Hall organ is worth listening to as a solo instrument. We know already what it can do as a religioso 'also ran' to Handel's 'Largo,' the Bach-Gounod 'Ave Maria,' and other battle-horses. A recital by Dupré should convince the authorities that there is a public for fine organ music well played. When they see us coming in crowds to hear the brilliant Frenchman, they may give us a chance of hearing one of our brilliant Englishmen. We have a few.

H. G.

Opera in London

BY FRANCIS E. BARRETT

THE CARL ROSA SEASON : A NEW WORK

Although it came late and was all too brief, the London autumn opera season was remarkably successful. The wisdom of the arrangement made by the Carl Rosa Company to give a season at Covent Garden proved to be fully justified. Large audiences were the rule throughout the four weeks, and on several occasions the attendance constituted a record. This was especially the case with respect to 'Carmen.' This favourite opera had not been seen at Covent Garden for many a day—a fact that made it a strong attraction. The other performances were all well attended, and I did not see one really 'thin' house throughout the season. Everybody was surprised by the fact, with the exception of myself. Close observation of the operatic needs of London has enabled me to make the deduction that given the examples it wants to see the Metropolitan public is always ready to patronise performances of opera in English. I need scarcely add that the performances must be of good level and the conditions generally as perfect as possible. All these requirements were met by the Carl Rosa Company, with the result that it has received ample compensation for its trouble. And as the outcome of such attraction the public responded royally when a new work was put on, the attendance at the first performance of 'David Garrick'—Mr. Reginald Somerville's latest opera—being in every way remarkable if only because of the interest shown by the occupants of the cheaper seats, who filled them as they have never been filled before for the production of a new British work.

A POPULAR RÉPERTOIRE

If familiar, the répertoire was certainly popular. London has had so little opportunity of becoming acquainted with the standard works that it was only too pleased to see and hear 'Lohengrin,' 'Il Trovatore,' 'Carmen,' 'Faust,' 'Tannhäuser,' and the other examples that in the minds of so many constitute due representation of the form. Then,

having given the public opportunities for testing its qualities, the Company proceeded judiciously to vary and expand the scheme. This was done by adding in turn Saint-Saëns' 'Samson and Delilah' and Wolf-Ferrari's 'The Jewels of the Madonna' and 'The Secret of Suzanne,' and 'Tristan and Isolda' from known matter; with Mr. Somerville's work and Mr. Stephen Philpot's 'Dante and Beatrice' as novelty and semi-novelty. The least popular proved—curiously enough—to be 'The Tales of Hoffmann,' which is explained by the fact that it has been given so frequently and so badly in recent years that the public is shy of it. But the approval extended to certain examples was so remarkable, especially in the case of 'Carmen,' 'Samson,' and the novelty, that more performances of them would have 'gone,' as the term is. Unfortunately the management set out the whole répertoire beforehand, so that it was not possible to arrange for repeats of operas for which there was a demand. However, it is satisfactory to know that the Company intends to return to Covent Garden next autumn, when it will stay for a longer time.

A VERSATILE COMPANY

The individual work done by the members of the Company has been of extraordinary versatility. Nothing seems to come amiss to Miss Beatrice Miranda. She has sung Elsa, Giulettta, Aida, Cho-Cho-San, Tosca, Mahyla, and finally she created the chief soprano part in the new opera. And she has done it all with conviction, never failing to give well-defined characterisation and to sing with great wealth of beautiful tone. Miss Doris Woodall has displayed similar pliancy of gift. Ortrud on Monday, she was Carmen on Saturday, with an outstanding Amneris thrown in, and all done with marked effect. The male members have displayed equal diversity of ability. Mr. William Boland has revealed himself as an operatic tenor of a calibre not met with in recent years, and has shown gifts as an actor never before associated with a like amount of vocal power. The experienced hands like Mr. Frederick Clendon and Mr. Harry Brindle have done sterling work, never failing to rise to the occasion. This versatility, let me remark in passing, is one of the striking characteristics of the British operatic artist, but in the case of the operatic soprano has not been met with since the days of that wonderfully gifted singer Fanny Moody, to whom 'The Bohemian Girl' and Isolda came with equal ease.

Much promise has been shown by the younger members of the Company. Miss Gladys Seager gave us a pleasing, though not powerful, Marguerite; Miss Ethel Austin, as Elizabeth, displayed a voice of the real operatic quality; Miss Gladys Cranston made a charming Nedda, and was one of the most vocally graceful Mimis I have heard on the British stage; Miss Eva Turner, like Miss Elspeth Wakefield and Miss Gladys Parr, has demonstrated how good is the material in our midst. The tenors have by no means shown themselves inferior. With reservations I can prophesy a future for Mr. John Perry, and Mr. Parry Jones makes up in temperament for what he may lack in voice. Of the baritones Mr. Kingsley Lark has made it clear that he is an uncommonly good and intelligent actor who compels regret that his voice is not heavier and rather better produced. Mr. Booth Hichen should come to the fore; his Silvio was as good as one could wish, and his other work was of high promise.

THE GENERAL ENSEMBLE

All attention was paid to the general ensemble of the Company, and with good results. The plan of employing a large chorus of a hundred and fifty voices in the choral operas—so often advocated and practised by Charles Manners—was followed in this season. The effect was not quite what was anticipated, for the fact seemed to be overlooked that so large a body requires special stage rehearsing if it is to move with any effect, and has to be coached in the work generally. As it was, the volume of tone was not so great as it might have been, and the effect was disappointing. On the other hand, where the Company's chorus appeared in normal numbers the effect was entirely satisfactory. The playing of the orchestra was excellent, and the skill of its directors, M. Henriquez de la Fuente and Mr. Charles Webber, has been very marked.

THE NEW ADDITIONS

As I have already stated, several additions to the répertoire were made. The first was Saint-Saëns' popular 'Samson and Delilah.' It is no stranger either to the English répertoire or to Covent Garden, but it has certainly never before been so well given in English. There was no attempt to imitate foreign representations. The Company's presentation was its own, and it was unquestionably effective. There was no forcing the pace, and there were no idiotic 'pictures' to bring down the curtain—and execrations—at the end of each Act. Miss Doris Woodall added considerably to her reputation by her impersonation of Delilah, and Mr. Boland's Samson was one of the best I have seen. It had vigour and character, and was finely sung. The other parts were ably given, and the chorus singing was remarkable in point of tone and tune. M. Fuente's reading of the score was most musicianly.

It was the late Mr. Walter van Noorden, so long associated with the Company—the brother of the present proprietor—who acquired the English rights of M. Wolf-Ferrari's blood-thirsty opera, 'The Jewels of the Madonna' as soon as it was produced in this country. There must have been a certain amount of prescience in the matter, for the representation the Company gave was decidedly good. It is this fact, in conjunction with the tuneful and novel nature of the music, that will gain popularity for the work; its story will never be attractive, no matter of what religious persuasion one may be, including 'Jew, Infidel, or Turk.' But there is some very skilful music, and Miss Miranda, Mr. Hebden Foster, and Mr. William Boland gave it splendidly. The singing of Miss Miranda and Mr. Boland in the climax-making scene of the theft of the jewels was some of the finest I have heard on the English stage. The audience took very kindly to the work, and cheered the representation to the echo. The other additions, 'The Secret of Suzanne' and 'Tristan,' came too late to permit of notice this month.

'DAVID GARRICK'

The new opera by Mr. Reginald Somerville, commissioned by the Company and based on Robertson's famous play of 'David Garrick,' pleased everyone. Its success was assured from the first when it became clear that the composer had treated his subject in the form of a light opera, lyrical in design and tuneful in expression. No one can deny that this is the best treatment for the subject. The vein is duly thickened or reduced to suit the occasion, and the way he meets those situations without

ever becoming involved or obscure testified to the clarity of the composer's vision. The music is one long tune—a thing rather lacking in English operatic music, in spite of the fact that tune is the one thing the average musical person admires. Mr. Somerville's melody ebbs and flows throughout the score, but never slackens. The music has a pleasant character of its own, and owes very little to outside influences. At the same time it is catchy, with the result that I heard some humming of one of the duet themes as the audience left the theatre. The various duets between Garrick and Ada are remarkable for their vocal quality, and for the fact that they are so contrived that the melodic outline is never abandoned for a more complicated style. The whole is a pleasant and pleasing light opera, and one well calculated to draw attention to native effort in the theatre where it is so much needed. It was well done in every way. Mr. Boland made an excellent Garrick, singing and acting with greater effect than one expects on the operatic stage. Miss Miranda was a charming Ada, and her fine voice was of immense service in giving special import to her share of the music. Mr. Brindle as Ingot, Mr. Kingsley Lark as Chivy, and Mr. Clendon and Miss Parr as Mr. and Mrs. Smith, all helped in a well-prepared, well-mounted, and wholly worthy production which the composer directed.

AT THE OLD VIC.

The latest and most daring addition to the operatic attractions at the Old Vic. has been 'Tristan and Isolde,' which however came at a date that precludes notice this month. But the fact remains, and the approval was very sincere. For the more familiar 'Magic Flute' of Mozart there was cordial welcome. It was carefully given as last year with all desire to preserve the spirit of Mozart along with the best possible representation. In the performance Misses Muriel Gough and Winifred Kennard, Messrs. Tudor Davies, Clive Carey, and Derwood distinguished themselves.

THE SWEDISH BALLET

A new dancing force was suddenly sprung upon London in the middle of the month in the shape of the Swedish Ballet, which appeared at the Palace Theatre. Quite a different phase of the dancer's art is represented by this organization. It has a character of its own. The technique is free and exceedingly graceful, and the designing distinguished by great imagination. What is so pleasing a feature of the work is that many of the numbers have a national foundation. Examples may be cited in the 'Nuit de St. Jean' number, with its quaint observance of that significant event, and in 'Les Vierges Folles,' a version of the Wise and Foolish Virgins presented as a Swedish allegory of rather humorous turn. In both of these Swedish folk-music is used with uncommonly good effect, showing what can be done in that direction by ourselves when eventually we have the British ballet. The other numbers at the first performance were a fascinating illustration of Ravel's pieces 'Le Tombeau de Couperin,' here styled 'Au Temps Jadis,' and a miming scene, 'El Greco,' with some remarkable music by M. Ingelbrecht, the orchestral conductor. All the Company display much individuality, and the efforts of Mlle. Jenny Hasselquist and M. Jean Borlin, both as dancers and mimes, are of special distinction for their legitimacy, fidelity, and grace. The accompanying music, which includes some of the inevitable Chopin, is of high value and admirably performed.

Choral Notes and News

BY W. MCNAUGHT

To keep up a recurrent commentary on choral music in and around London is not an easy task. There is none of that steady flow of stimulating 'copy' enjoyed by a writer on London's orchestral music, or chamber music, or opera. Even *ex opera semper aliquid novi*. Our source of excitement in choral matters during the last month or two (allowing for the fact that the Bach Choir and Philharmonic Choir have been snapped up by 'London Concerts,' and that the Oriana concerts occurred too late) consists of one performance of the Mass in B minor, and one of 'The Dream of Gerontius,' works that ought to be taken for granted in a self-respecting choral existence. Of course the chief trouble of choral societies is finance, although most of the people taking part in a choral concert do so for nothing, and even pay a subscription for the privilege. But even if there came a wave of enthusiasm which brought in hundreds of singers and sight-readers clamouring for four rehearsals a week and new works to study, the expense of engaging a large orchestra would remain, as it is now, an obstacle of huge proportions. Present-day composers are much to blame, not only in the way they ignore the essentials of choral style, but in the persistent hankering after subsidiary orchestral effects. They must have tubas, cor anglais, bass clarinet, glockenspiel and the like, and divide their strings into sixteen parts. There is a whole world of unwritten choral music—capable of plumbing any depths, and soaring to any heights—in which the chorus parts are chiefly diatonic, and the accompaniment is for 'theatre' orchestra, or even for strings only. Considering how subtle and telling choral music can be without any accompaniment at all, it is rather surprising that composers, when they want instruments to join in, insist on having about sixty.

But lest this ramble should contradict the plea that choral affairs offer no 'copy,' we must come back to our record. As suggested above, the season has been one of inspiring activity, for it included a performance of the Mass in B minor and one of 'The Dream of Gerontius.' The Mass was given at the Northern Po'ytechnic Hall on November 27 by the Alexandra Palace Choral and Orchestral Society under Mr. Allen Gill. This choir is in a peculiar position. Originally designed to fit the huge platform of the Palace, it can only accommodate itself to the next-best hall by a limitation of membership, and at every concert it views the sad spectacle of money being turned away at the doors. One is genuinely sorry for this plight of a Society to whose spirited work we owe so much. Even now it is unsurpassed in achievement and enterprise—with 'The Apostles' in its spring programme. Its singing in the choruses of the Mass needs no detailed description, being always weighty, buoyant in rhythm, resourceful in the long phrase and in climax. The Sanctus was given as if the choir came fresh to the task and not as if (as often happens) the Resurrexit and Confiteor had sapped the energy of the singers.

No better choice than 'The Dream of Gerontius' could have been made for the revival of the London Choral Society, for it was to this body that London owed its first opportunity for hearing the work in 1904. The performance at Queen's Hall on December 1

under Mr. Arthur Fagge was more than creditable to a choir which, in everything that makes for cohesion and interpretative power, was newly-formed. The singers showed a good deal of the quality that used to carry the old London Choral Society through its ambitious tasks—a certain vivacity and directness, and a clear suggestion of good musicianship in the average. With Miss Olga Haley, Mr. John Adams, and Mr. Robert Radford as the solo-singers the performance was well worth hearing.

Only one concert of the Royal Choral Society comes into this month's account, the annual festival of carols being too late for inclusion. The performance of 'Judas Maccabaeus' on November 27 is said to have been well worthy of the traditions of the Society in its breadth and sonority, and great praise was given to the singing of 'Hail, Judea,' 'Ah wretched Israel,' 'Sing unto God,' and other choruses. The solos were sung by Madame Elsa Stralia, Miss Margaret Balfour, Miss Millicent Russell, Mr. William Boland and Mr. Graham Smart, and Mr. Frederick Bridge conducted.

According to reliable information the performance of 'King Olaf' given by the Ealing Philharmonic Society on November 27, was the highest achievement in the Society's record, the vitality and technical certainty of the singing being of a degree rarely obtained. Great credit for this advancing capacity of a local organization is due to the conductor, Mr. E. Victor Williams. The solo parts were taken by Miss May Kearney, Mr. Sidney Pointer, and Mr. Edward Dykes.

The Ibis Musical Society, now in its second season, was heard at Queen's Hall, on November 26, in a capital performance of 'The Golden Legend,' preceded by the 'In Memoriam' Overture. The soloists were Miss Florence Mellors and Miss Gladys Palmer, and Messrs. John Adams, Esmond Bristol, and Edgar Archer. The orchestra and choir numbered about five hundred. Mr. Arthur Fagge conducted. This is an excellent example of business-house music-making, the performers being employees of the Prudential Assurance Company.

Other London events that claim to be mentioned with approval are the performance of a selection from Purcell's 'King Arthur' by the Westminster Choral Society, under Mr. Vincent Thomas, on November 30; of 'The Golden Legend' by the Dulwich Philharmonic Society at the Crystal Palace, on November 20, under Mr. Martin Kingslake; of 'Merrie England' by the Crystal Palace Choral and Orchestral Society on November 27, under Mr. Walter W. Hedgecock; and the concert of the South West Choral Society under Mr. A. R. Saunders at Battersea Town Hall on December 1, when the programme included 'A Tale of Old Japan,' 'Blest Pair of Sirens,' and Balfour Gardiner's 'News from Whydah.'

The Musician's Bookshelf

BY 'FESTE'

The day of the lengthy review in a journal such as this is gone, at all events for a time. Among the volumes awaiting consideration are at least half a dozen that years ago, when books on music were few, would have called for and received at least a page. At present, with publishers falling over one another in their haste to meet the increased public interest in the art, only brief notice is possible.

In the case of such a book as Mrs. Curwen's 'Psychology applied to Music Teaching' (Curwen, 15s.), the only review that can do the work justice is one

(Continued on page 40.)

The roseate hues of early dawn.

January 1, 1921.

ANTHEM FOR GENERAL USE.

Words by Mrs. C. F. ALEXANDER (1852).

Composed by HUGH BLAIR.

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Larghetto.

SPAN.

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The Musical Times, No. 935.

mf

sun - set sky, How fast they fade a - way! . . . Oh, for the pear - ly

mf

sun - set sky, How fast they fade a - way! . . . Oh, for the pear - ly

mf

sun - set sky, How fast they fade a - way! . . . Oh, for the pear - ly

mf

sun - set sky, How fast they fade a - way! . . . Oh, for the pear - ly

p Sw. mf

gates of Heaven, Oh, for the gold - en floor, . . . Oh, for the Sun of

f

gates of Heaven, . . . Oh, for the gold - en floor, . . . Oh, for the Sun of

cres. f

gates of Heaven, Oh, for the gold - en floor, Oh, for the Sun of

cres. f

gates of Heaven, Oh, for the gold - en floor, Oh, for the Sun . . . of

Gt. f

Gt. cres. f

Ped. Gt. to Ped.

Right - eous - ness That set - teth nev - er - more! . . .

Right - eous - ness That set - teth nev - er - more! . . .

Right - eous - ness That set - teth nev - er - more! . . .

Right - eous - ness That set - teth nev - er - more! . . .

dim.

Gt. to Ped. in.

THE ROSEATE HUES OF EARLY DAWN.

January 1, 1921.

Soprano Solo.

Here faith is ours, and Heaven - ly hope, And

Sic. to Ped.

senza Ped.

grace to lead us higher; But there are per - fect - ness and peace, Be -

p Ped.

rall.

Lento.

Lento. $\text{♩} = 60$.

- yond our best de - sire... Oh, by Thy love and an - guish,

rall.

pp

Lord, Oh, by Thy life laid down, Grant that we fall not

from... Thy grace, Nor cast a - way... our crown.

Gt. to
Ped. in.

(3)

Chorus.

Oh, by Thy love and an - guish, Lord, Oh, by Thy life laid
 Oh, by Thy love and an - guish, Lord, Oh, by Thy life laid
 Oh, by Thy love and an - guish, Lord, Oh, by Thy life laid
 Oh, by Thy love and an - guish, Lord, Oh, by Thy life laid
 Oh, . . . by Thine an - guish, Lord, Oh, . . . by Thy life laid

down, Grant that we fall not from Thy grace, Nor cast a - way our rit.
 down, Grant that we fall not from Thy grace, Nor cast a - way our rit.
 down, Grant that we fall not from Thy grace, Nor cast a - way our rit.
 down, Grant that we fall not from Thy grace, Nor cast a - way our rit.
 down, Grant that we fall not from Thy grace, Nor cast a - way our rit.

Tempo 1mo.

CROWN. The
 CROWN. The
 CROWN. The
 CROWN. The
 CROWN. The
 CROWN. The
 p *Sve.*

high - est hopes we cher - ish here, How fast they tire and faint; How
 high - est hopes we cher - ish here, How fast they tire and faint; .. How
 high - est hopes we cher - ish here, How fast they tire and faint; How
 high - est hopes we cher - ish here, How fast they tire and faint; How

mp

many a spot de - files the robe That wraps an earth - ly saint! ..

many a spot de - files the robe That wraps an earth - ly saint! ..

many a spot de - files the robe That wraps an earth - ly saint! ..

many a spot de - files the robe That wraps an earth - ly saint! ..

mf

Oh, for a heart that nev - er sins,.. Oh, for a soul wash'd white,
cres.

Oh, for a heart that nev - er sins,.. Oh, for a soul wash'd white,
cres.

Oh, for a heart that nev - er sins,.. Oh, for a soul wash'd white,
cres.

Oh, for a heart that nev - er sins,.. Oh, for a soul wash'd white,
cres.

mf

Oh, for a heart that nev - er sins,.. Oh, for a soul wash'd white,
cres.

mf Gt.

Gt. to Ped.

The musical score consists of six staves of music for voice and piano. The vocal line is in soprano C-clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass F-clef. The music is in common time, with a key signature of one flat. The vocal part begins with a short melodic line, followed by lyrics in a three-line format. The piano part features harmonic support with sustained notes and rhythmic patterns. The vocal line continues with lyrics, including "Oh, for a voice to praise . . . our KING, a voice . . to", followed by a piano solo section. The vocal line resumes with "Oh, for a voice to praise . . . our KING, Nor", and the piano accompaniment continues with harmonic support. The vocal line concludes with "voice to praise . . our KING, a voice . . to praise . . our", followed by a piano solo section. The vocal line resumes with "wea - ry day or night! Oh, for a voice to praise our", and the piano accompaniment continues with harmonic support. The vocal line concludes with "wea - ry day . . or night! a voice . . to praise . . our", followed by a piano solo section. The vocal line resumes with "day or night! . . Oh, for a voice to praise . . our", and the piano accompaniment continues with harmonic support. The vocal line concludes with "cres.", followed by a piano solo section. The vocal line resumes with "cres.", and the piano accompaniment continues with harmonic support. The vocal line concludes with "cres.", followed by a piano solo section. The vocal line resumes with "cres.", and the piano accompaniment continues with harmonic support. The vocal line concludes with "cres.", followed by a piano solo section. The vocal line resumes with "cres.", and the piano accompaniment continues with harmonic support. The vocal line concludes with "cres.", followed by a piano solo section.

(Continued from page 32.)

containing liberal quotations. As such a notice appeared in the December issue of our companion journal, the *School Music Review*, there is no need to do more in this place than to urge teachers to make an early acquaintance with the book. It deals with a subject of prime importance to all interested in educational matters, and it has the great merit of being practical and clearly written. The latter point is worth special mention, because we know but too well the verbal and mental fog that usually results from an attempt to discuss such subjects as psychology.

Musical historians are apt to regard the progress of the art as a single phenomenon, whereas it is but one of several that act and react on one another. To-day we see a good example in the obvious connection between certain developments in contemporary music, painting, and poetry. An American writer, Arthur Ware Locke, has dealt with an aspect of this relation of the arts in his 'Music and the Romantic Movement in France' (Kegan Paul, 4s. 6d.), a thoughtful book that should be read by all interested in French literature and music.

George Lowe's 'Josef Holbrooke and his Work' (Kegan Paul, 4s. 6d.) is a stout volume of over three hundred pages, with copious musical illustrations. One who writes of a living composer has a difficult task, for obvious reasons. Not only is the writer too near the music ; he is also too near the man. Mr. Lowe does not hesitate to express unfavourable opinions of some of Holbrooke's work, so his somewhat lavish praise carries the more weight. He deals with the whole of the composer's output in chronological order. The book is, moreover, an interesting record of a stormy and struggling career. If that career, so far as the composition side is concerned, has made a less emphatic mark than its early promise led us to expect, the reason is perhaps to be found in Holbrooke's fecundity. It is a great thing to be able to compose easily, but it is an even greater thing to be able to screw oneself up to burn a good half of the result. One feels inclined to dispute some of Mr. Lowe's conclusions. For example, speaking of Holbrooke's position as a chamber music composer, he tells us that only Elgar, Ireland, Cyril Scott, and the late W. Y. Hurlstone 'come into any sort of serious competition' with Holbrooke. And his defence, on the same page, of the classical form in chamber music, with its separate movements and full closes, is far from convincing. By the by, bearing in mind Holbrooke's battles on behalf of British music—perhaps I had better say British composers—it is odd that he seems to see no virtue in the language of his own country. His use of such titles as 'Zuneigung,' 'Werzwufung,' 'Wunderlicher Einfall,' with countless other unnecessary excursions into foreign dictionaries, strikes me as a form of snobbishness that I thought had begun to die out since the days of Mr. Foley and Signor Foli. It is true that some of these works were published abroad, but that does not entirely explain the habit. Foreigners who publish their works in England do not throw their own tongue overboard. Mr. Lowe would have improved his book if he had spent more time over the proof sheets, and, while removing some obvious slips, he would have done well to have scrapped nine-tenths of his italics and notes of exclamation. The volume is a useful compilation rather than a good piece of literature.

As we have some fine modern books on Bach, it seems at first sight that a new translation of Forkel's work is unnecessary. Alone, perhaps, we could well do without it, though it has all the interest attaching to the first critical appreciation of Bach, and one written moreover when the old man's fame seemed to have dimmed for ever. But the new translator, Prof. Sanford Terry, has added appendices that altogether more than double the size of the original, so that Forkel has ceased to be a merely interesting survival and has become a necessity (Constable, 21s.). The first translation—often ascribed to Samuel Wesley, but really the work of a banker—was notoriously defective. Prof. Terry, in his Preface, says it is impossible to identify this Bachian banker with certainty. I understand, however, that he has since done so, and that a letter on the subject appears in this issue of the *Musical Times*. Prof. Terry not only retranslates Forkel, but helps him out by copious footnotes. The appendices consist of a chronological catalogue of Bach's works, a chapter on the Church Cantatas with a table giving dates and other particulars, a detailed list of the Bachgesellschaft editions, a bibliography, a collation of the Novello and Peters editions of the Organ works, and a genealogy of the Bach family—altogether well over a hundred pages of valuable information. There are also some admirable reproductions of photographs—Bach's home at Eisenach, the statue at that place, the ditto at Leipsic, the Church and School of St. Thomas at Leipsic, &c. Little did Forkel guess that his modest book was to be thus handsomely revived a century after his death.

The second of the series of Church Music Monographs issued by the Faith Press (4s. 6d.) is 'The Church Organ: an Introduction to the Study of Modern Organ-building,' by the Rev. Noel A. Bonavia Hunt. The author is so well-known as an expert on this complicated subject that his latest work needs no more than bare mention. Some excellent illustrations by Mr. J. H. T. Burrell are a valuable aid to the text.

I do not know why the *Musical Times* has been favoured with a review copy of the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution (Washington; Government Printing Office). In its seven hundred pages there is no article on music. However, I return thanks heartily, for its hundreds of beautifully reproduced photographs are a delight. Readers who are interested in such subjects as Catalepsy in Phasmidae, Bird Rookeries of the Tortugas, Ojibway Habitations, Ancient Human Remains in Florida, and the Formation of Coral Reefs, will find the Report a handy little book to have about the house.

Gramophone Notes

BY 'DISCUS'

The Editor has handed me some interesting correspondence from readers who welcome the prospect of a monthly review of gramophone records. One of the writers touches on a point of importance. He warns me in a friendly way that what gramophone users require is candid information as to what records are satisfactory from a musical point of view. He says :

Bach, it of Forkel's could well attaching and on he seemed translator, voices that the original, interesting able, 21s.), Wesley, notorious says it is like with has since appears in Jerry not out by list of a chaptering dates of the collation the Organ family— valuable admirable some at ditto at Thomas at s modest century

Music (4s. 6d.) to the Rev. well-known that his. Some well are a

mes has Annual Washington; hundred never, I beautifully others who Gypsy in Ojibway Florida, find the house.

eresting the ophone a point y way candid factory

To suggest that a record of a song by Mozart is one of the best records merely because Mozart was one of the greatest composers, seems silly to those of us who have tried the record and disliked extremely the metallic quality of the singer's voice.

He thinks, too, that it is high time we began to be able to understand why some orchestral records are so very much better than others, even where the same players and recorders are concerned. He ends by supposing that frank discussion on these matters will annoy the makers of records, but imagines (quite rightly) that I shall not trouble about that.

If the makers of records are as sensible and businesslike as I believe them to be, they will welcome any amount of fair discussion. The gramophone is still a long way short of perfection, good as it is. The maker who gets his best foot foremost towards the ideal is the one that is going to collar the best of the trade. The use of the instrument among musicians and educational workers will develop in proportion to the enterprise and perseverance of the makers. The latter know this quite well. A review that doesn't frankly distinguish between the good and bad is of no use to the maker in the long run, because it soon ceases to carry weight. Indiscriminate praise is as futile as indiscriminate honours. 'When everyone is somebody, then no one is anybody.'

Harpsichord records are handicapped by the fact that the instrument is obsolete, and its music unfamiliar. Nevertheless, there should be many musicians to whom the four records recently issued by H.M.V. will be welcome. They are double-sided, and consist of:

- (1.) 'Nobody's Gigge' (Farnaby) and three English folk-dances;
- (2.) Scarlatti's Sonatas in D and A;
- (3.) Couperin's 'L'Arlequin' and 'Tambourin, a Purcell Gavotte, and a Bach Prelude;
- (4.) A couple of Bach fugues.

The least interesting is the Scarlatti. The Farnaby and folk-dances are delightfully quaint. The French pieces are old friends, the Purcell Gavotte ought to be, and the Bach Prelude is fine though unfamiliar. The two fugues are not from the '48.' They are capital specimens, and the one in D has a splendid cadenza. Mrs. Woodhouse is the player. The tone is a kind of compromise, the peculiar stringy rustle of the harpsichord having mostly disappeared, the result being suggestive of a peasant old pianoforte in an exceptionally good state of preservation. The batch as a whole gives one a great deal of pleasure, the more so as the music is of a type that wears well.

After these delicate sounds, a couple of pianoforte records by Cortot provide vivid contrast. Liszt's 'La Leggierezza' and Saint-Saëns' 'Waltz-Study' are pretty much of a muchness as music, and there is little to choose between the records on the score of effectiveness. If my preference is for the former, it is because of the delicate beauty of some of the scale-passages. The pearly clearness of these just makes the Liszt the better of two excellent records (H.M.V.).

Despite occasional want of balance—no doubt inevitable—Elgar's Sonata for pianoforte and violin, played by Misses Marjorie Hayward and Una Bourne (H.M.V.) is a success. It is in two double-sided records, (1) the first movement and Romance, and (2) the Finale, divided. The gramophone plays strange tricks, some of which are pleasant surprises. I have heard the Sonata performed on several occasions by our

best players, but the *pizzicato* chords in the Romance have never reached my ears so clearly as they do via this record. Another point: I enjoyed the Sonata when hearing it at first hand, but since the gramophone has reproduced it for me not less than a dozen times I like it even better. How far previous knowledge of a work of this kind is necessary in order to get the best out of the gramophone I do not know. Obviously, familiarity with the music enables one to make good certain deficiencies, such as the want of balance mentioned above. No doubt manufacturers will some day be able to ensure that a sonata for violin and pianoforte shall sound less like a violin solo with an occasionally important pianoforte accompaniment. Yet another point: Why should not metronome marks be placed on works of this type, and indeed on practically all records? The dial on the gramophone could easily bear the figures most used, say, from 50 to 120, graded in fives or tens.

A brilliant vocal record is Galli-Curci's 'Una Voce' from 'The Barber' (H.M.V.). Its opening makes one wonder that strains so threadbare can still have any attractive power, but long before the vocal fireworks are over one has to admit that the magic of the human voice is shown nowhere more convincingly than in this ability to make such worthless material enjoyable.

The Flonzaley Quartet's playing of Grainger's 'Molly on the Shore' has been recorded by H.M.V. with only fair results. A good deal of the jolly effect of the music comes through, but the lower strings are frequently vague and lacking in tone. This is a case where one may say that one enjoys the music in spite of the record.

Edward German's 'Gipsy Suite' (H.M.V.) is a good orchestral reproduction. I have heard only two of the four movements—the Menuetto and Tarantella, on a double-sided. A surprisingly large proportion of instrumental details emerge, especially from the clarinet and flute, a rapid chromatic gurgle by the latter being a specially enjoyable feature. The Tarantella is the better movement of the two—German at his effervescent.

The Aeolian Company has sent a batch of new records from which I choose four for mention this month. Rosing's 'Vesti la Gubbia' (Aeolian-Vocalion) is quite startling in its power and intensity of expression. It is more moving than I should have imagined any kind of mechanical reproduction could ever be. I forget for the moment whether Rosing can sing in English. If he can, the Aeolian should record this performance in the vulgar tongue, for the benefit of the many who have not heard 'Pagliacci,' or who do not know Italian.

The record of the London String Quartet's playing of Mozart's Quartet in D is especially satisfactory in that it gives us the musical texture with unusual clearness. The violoncello part is much more distinct as a whole than that in the Flonzaley record mentioned above. Is this because the music in the Mozart is lyrical rather than bustling? Evidently certain types of rapid bass parts do not record well. Is it a matter of pitch, pace, or tone, or a bit of all three? This Mozart record would have been better if the players had not overdone their *pp*. Still, even the softest passages are distinct. The four movements are on two records. I have heard only the third and fourth—Menuetto and Finale Allegretto. These should meet the needs of the correspondent quoted above, as they give us the best music well reproduced.

Music

seventh recital
plebiscite pro-
as showing the
First movement
passionata from
Theme, and
Saint-Saëns;
Seventy-one

ts of the chord
ngers. During
s sung Bach's
on, Vaughan
Parry's 'Bless
desiring,' and
ans include a
the following

Verdi
han Williams
Parry

Back

Harold Darke
Purcell Holt

l of all who
ould apply to
ils are held at
Dr. Darke

een held at
er the direction
essiah' were
lyton Dobson
ere sung by
ret Walker,
November 21
(Oliver King)

recitals in aid
I supported.
St. John's,
y the way, a
significant:

s Church on
Mr. Fred J.
nt was played
(pianoforte),
n Swainson

Society sang
ere Miss Ida
ard Lovesey,
conducted,

ymass Castle,
direction of
ng Stainer's
g. Mrs. J.
Hurley.

nt organ at
ary at 5.30,
. Williams,
r. Clifford

1 Church—
1 Preludes,
. Lawrence
acaglia and
ta No. 1,

Mr. R. Buchanan Morton, House of Hope Presbyterian Church, St. Paul, Minn.—Prelude and Fugue in D, Bach; Londonderry Air; Toccata-Prelude, *Bairstow*; Fantasia, *Saint-Saëns*; Scherzo in G minor, *Callaerts*.

Mr. Harold M. Dawber, St. George's, Stockport (two recitals)—Fantasia, *Cyril Jenkins*; Madrigal and Divertissement, *Vierne*; Sonata in E, *Handel*; Chant de Mai, *Jongen*; Allegro (Symphony No. 6), *Widor*; Prelude on 'Eventide,' *Parry*; Capriccio, *Ireland*; Wigan Parish Church—'Verdun,' *Stanford*; Sonata in E, *Handel*; Concert Scherzo, *Purcell*; *J. Mansfield*.

Mr. Frederick J. Tarris, Baptist Tabernacle, Barking—Intermezzo, *Hollins*; Pastoral in A, *Guilmant*; Sonata No. 2, *Mendelssohn*; Lament, *Cyril Jenkins*; Concert Overture, *Faukes*.

Mr. F. J. A. Eccles, Holy Trinity, Leamington Spa—Overture 'Occasional' Oratorio; Berceuse, *Rousseau*; Nocturne, *Dunhill*; Prelude and Fugue in B minor, Bach; *Villanella, Ireland*.

Mr. J. S. Yates, St. Andrew's, Pretoria (two recitals)—Fugue in E flat, Bach; *Cantilène* (Sonata No. 11), *Rheinberger*; Berceuse and Carillon, *Vierne*; Prelude, 'Dream of Gerontius'; 'Finlandia'; Sonata No. 6, *Mendelssohn*; Air, *S. Wesley*; Chant de Mai, *Jongen*; Andante from String Quartet, *Debussy*; A Wedding Idyll, *Yates*.

Mr. Alfred Hollins, Presbyterian Church, Cardiff (two recitals)—Sonata No. 4, *Mendelssohn*; Theme with Variations and Fugue, *Intermezzo*, Scherzo, and Triumphal March, *Hollins*; Berceuse, *Vierne*; Toccata, *Widor*; Gothic Suite, *Boellmann*; Prelude and Fugue in D, Bach; Question and Answer, *Wolstenholme*.

Mr. H. S. Middleton, Truro Cathedral—Choral Song and Fugue, *S. S. Wesley*; Cantabile and Pièce Héroïque, *Frank*; Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, Bach; Idylle, *Elgar*.

Mr. W. J. Lancaster, Bolton Parish Church—Prelude and Fugue in A minor, Bach; Allegro Cantabile (Symphony No. 5), *Widor*; Requiem, *Eternum*, *Harwood*; Overture in C minor, *Hollins*; Choral Improvisation No. 53, *Karg-Elert*; Sonata No. 6, *Mendelssohn*.

Mr. Leitch Owen, Edge Hill Parish Church—Prelude and Fugue in C minor, Bach; Impressions du Soir, *Stichl*; March of the Magi, *Varley Roberts*.

Mr. James Preston, St. George's, Jesmond, Newcastle (five recitals)—Choral Prelude, Bach; Fugue, *Reubke*; Sonata No. 4, *Alan Gray*; Catalonian Rhapsody, *Bonnet*; Scherzo, *Healey Willan*.

Mr. Stanley E. Lucas, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Canbury—Allegretto, *Wolstenholme*; Preludes, 'Lohengrin' and 'Tristan and Isolde.'

Mr. R. E. Redman, Clapham Congregational Church—First movement, Sonata No. 18, *Rheinberger*; Meditation Elegie, *Borowski*; Preludio Romantico, *Ravanello*; Prelude and Fugue on BACH, Bach; Légende, *Redman*; 'Finlandia.'

Mr. W. Dymore Boseley, St. Nicholas, Guildford—Introduction and Fugue, *Rubke*; 'Harmonies du Soir,' *Karg-Elert*; Variations on an Original Theme, *Stuart Archer*; Choral No. 3, *Frank*; Evening Song, *Bairstow*; Passacaglia and Fugue, Bach; Scherzo, *Caprice Baynon*.

Mr. A. C. P. Embeling, St. Nicholas, Guildford—Sonata in A minor, *Rheinberger*; Preludes, 'St. Peter' and 'Veni Creator,' *Darke*; Elegy, *Borowski*; Toccata, *Widor*.

Mr. Fred Gostelow, Ilford Baptist Church—Choral No. 3, *Frank*; Meditation, *Gostelow*; Intermezzo, *Hollins*; Luton Parish Church—Marche Pontificale, *Tombelli*; Air with Variations, *Haydn-Best*; Scherzo Symphonique, *Guilmant*.

Mr. G. Virgil Dawson, Mount Zion Congregational Church, Sheffield—Symphony in C minor, *Holloway*; Berceuse, *Jarnefeldt*; 'Alpine Sketch' and 'A Song from the East,' *Cyril Scott*.

Mr. Ernest Bittcliffe, St. Mary Magdeline, Bradford—Gothic Suite, *Boellmann*; Allegretto, *Frederic Archer*; Impromptu in A minor, *Coleridge-Taylor*.

Mr. T. Newbould, St. Paul's, King Cross, Halifax—Fugue in E minor, Bach; Elegy, *Borowski*; 'Harmonies du Soir,' *Karg-Elert*; Gothic Suite, *Boellmann*; Sursum Corda and Alla Marcia, *Ireland*; Finale in B flat, *Frank*.

Mr. A. E. Jones, Town Hall, Bolton—Sonata No. 5, *Mendelssohn*; Allegro Pomposo, *Holloway*; Overture to 'Rienzi.'

Mr. Henry Riding, St. Mary-the-Virgin, Aldermanbury (four recitals)—Melody, *Yon*; Prelude, 'St. Michael,' *West*; Meditation in a Cathedral, *Silas*; Grace for a little Child, *Walford Davies*. (Collection: Westminster Abbey Fund, £11.)

Mr. William Algie, St. Columba Parish Church—Prelude and Fugue in D, Bach; Finale in E flat, *Guilmant*.

Mr. Harry Wall, St. Paul's, Covent Garden (five recitals)—Impression and 'Pax Vobiscum,' *Karg-Elert*; Elegie, *Introit*, Arabesque, *Offertoire*, Berceuse, and *Cortège*, *Vierne*; Prelude and Variations, *Farrar*; Prelude, *Fugue*, and Variation, *Frank*; Andante con Moto, *Frank Bridge*; Idylle and Skandinavisch, *Rheinberger*; Prelude on 'York,' *Charles Wood*; Jour de Noës, *Stuart Archer*.

Mr. Quentin Morvare Maclean, All Souls', Langham Place (three recitals)—Sonatas, *Elgar*; Variations on an Original Theme, *Stuart Archer*; Fantasia on BACH, *Liszt*; Chorale and Eleven Variations, Bach; Sonata, *Reubke*; Toccata, *Purcell*; Menuet Scherzo, *Jongen*; Fantasia and Fugue on 'Sleepers! wake,' *Reger*.

Mr. H. F. Rutland, St. Edward's, Cambridge—Sonata in F, *Stanford*; Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn-Tunes, *Vaughan Williams*; Canzonetta, *Cui*; Choral Prelude, Bach.

Mr. Alan Burr, St. Edward's, Cambridge—Two Pieces, *Byrd* and *Bull*; Fantasia (in four parts), *Gibbons*; Prelude, 'Rhosymedre,' *Vaughan Williams*; 'Now thank we all,' *Karg-Elert*.

Mr. T. Vernon Griffiths, St. Edward's, Cambridge—Toccata and Fugue in D minor, Bach; Sonata in E minor, *Rheinberger*; Madrigal, *Lemare*; Epilogue, *Harvey Grace*.

Mr. William Ellis, Newcastle Cathedral—Sonata No. 6, *Mendelssohn*; 'Sleepers! wake,' Bach; Fugue, *Reubke*.

Dr. Louis A. Hamand, Malvern Priory Church—Concert-Overture in C minor, *Hollins*; Fugue in G, Bach; Fantaisie, *Saint-Saëns*.

Dr. C. E. Jolley, St. George's, Hanover Square (four recitals)—Sonata No. 3, *Mendelssohn*; Fugues in E flat, G minor, Prelude and Fugue in D, and Toccata in F, Bach; Berceuse, *Vierne*; Prelude on 'Martyrdom,' *Parry*; Fantasia in F minor, *Mozart*; Toccata, *Boellmann*.

Mr. Herbert Hodge, St. Nicholas Cole Abbey (three recitals)—March in B flat, *Silas*; Prelude and Fugue in G, Bach; Sonata in C minor, *Mendelssohn*.

Mr. C. E. Blyton Dobson, High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham—Fugue in G minor, Bach; Allegretto, *Wolstenholme*; Overture to 'Oberon.'

Mr. A. G. Mathew, St. Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta—Prelude in G, Bach; Capriccio, *Ireland*; Two Movements, Sonata No. 16, *Rheinberger*; Pilgrims' March, *Mendelssohn*.

Mr. C. F. Eastwood, St. John's, Dumfries—Prelude in C, Bach; Voluntary, *Gibbons*; Toccata for Double Organ, *Blow*; Sonata in C minor, *Guilmant*; Largo, 'New World' Symphony; Cantilène and Minuet, *Marchant*.

Miss Florence Pope, St. Peter's, Hedgesford—Concert-Overture in C, *Hollins*; Pean, *Harwood*; Three Impressions, *Karg-Elert*.

[Many recital programmes are held over for want of space. Others are not inserted because they omit an important piece of information—the name of the town at which the recital took place.—ED., M.7.]

APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Leslie J. Gillespie, organist and choirmaster, Christ Church, Deptford.

Mr. R. Richardson-Jones, organist and choirmaster, Northampton Parish Church.

Letters to the Editor

MR. ERNEST NEWMAN ON 'THE PIANO-PLAYER'

SIR.—At last we have a really practical and sensitively musical book on the piano-player, and Mr. Newman's quite admirable work should be in the hands of every intelligent user of a piano-player. There are but few points on which I should venture to disagree with the author, but as an old 'pianolist' who has worked through all its models, I may perhaps have a helpful word in commentary.

Mr. Newman rightly says that the instrument could be made far more responsive and sensitive, but that it is not a good commercial proposition to do so, as only a comparatively small number would then be able to use it. Yet could not the music student be catered for in a specially suitable type of construction? The pianoforte maker does not make his instrument on the assumption that it will be used mainly by schoolgirls and learners; he makes it in the hope of meriting the advertising encomiums of a Paderewski, a Pachmann, a Hofmann, &c., so that that argument is disposed of.

Anyhow, I myself soon got so tired of the mechanical unresponsiveness of my pianola that I experimented and hit upon a method of improving it which I commend to any of your readers who are similarly dissatisfied with their instrument. Briefly it is this (and it can be adapted to any player at a trifling cost): The bellows that fill the wind-chest are worked by springs; normally the bellows contain two springs of 14-lb. each. These are provided so as to ensure sufficient air in the wind-chest to make all the notes sound, and to run the motor evenly. But this means that there is always too much air in the chest; no real *pp* or *fff* can be got, and no change of touch or accent by foot-pressure is possible except in, say, every two or three notes. To ask of the ordinary player a series of single notes *pp*, and each with a different accent, quality, or touch, is to demand the impossible; and yet if such cannot be procured, real nuance, phrasing, grading, or accent are impossible, and the player is almost useless musically.

It occurred to me that it should be possible to put only as much air in the wind-chest as was needed for the chord or note to be played, and if the spring-pressure were lightened it should be possible to make foot-pressure alone responsible for the touch and accent. I had one of the 14-lb. springs removed, and at once proved the truth of my theory; I then had the 14-lb. spring replaced by a 7-lb. spring, with the delightful result that I can now play a chord or a single note either *pp* or *ff* by foot-pressure alone; and can make the notes in a passage of single notes all different, and of whatever strength I desire, from *fff* to *fff*. All that has to be learned is never to let the bellows go slack, to keep each foot tight against the other, so that enough air is always in the chest for any note needed, the feet feeding each other as the notes pass by, each providing for what is to come. Nearly every note in a piece is thus given its own distinctive foot-pressure; one makes each note as it comes, as do the fingers. This method also gives complete control over phrasing—building up a sentence, as Mr. Newman has it. Crescendos and diminuendos are perfectly under control, ensuring perfect grading and therefore perfect phrasing. The work is so personal, so direct, and so human that it is far less fatiguing and a thousand times more enjoyable. We are really playing our pianoforte instead of merely 'operating a pianola.'

Part-writing also becomes much clearer; one hears the 'stuff' all over the keyboard. The muddy, thick effect so common in pianola playing disappears. The joy of perfect grading is very great—e.g., the *Scherzo* of Chopin's B minor Sonata can be interpreted with nearly all the free, intangible phrasing one desires.

But I must emphatically differ from Mr. Newman when, on p. 138, he says, 'There is nothing easier than to incorporate phrasing in the roll by means of the metronome. By the flicking of the tempo-lever all degrees of retardation and acceleration can be obtained; this is the way indeed in which the musician phrases on the piano-player.'

If so, I feel like saying, 'The less musician he.' Phrasing, the elocution of music, and is a question of emotional strength far more than rate of movement. A phrase is made *eres*, and *dim.* by its grading. Play a passage with a level tone, and the amount of tempo-lever flicking will give a feeling of phrasing. Also there are countless passages where no *rubato* of the least sort is permissible, and yet they must be perfectly phrased or be meaningless. As an instance chosen almost at random, play Fugue No. 22 of Book I. of the 'Forty-eight'. This needs the most intimate phrasing, but must be played in strict time. If Mr. Newman could get on his player the freedom of grading and accent I do not know he would not, I feel sure, have given this advice. It is the inability to get this full, free, spontaneous grading that tempts the pianolist to rely on the tempo-lever for his effect, leading to an abuse of *rubato*, and spoiling the natural rhythm of the passage.

I have made scores of converts to this light spring method, and all are genuinely grateful for the enormous increase in spontaneity, and in the personality it has conferred on the piano-player. An old argument against it was that accent should be got by the accent levers plus a full wind-chest, found, however, that this was a very difficult method to acquire, especially to any with feeble wrists or fingers, and nowadays it is quite out of the question, by reason of the theorising of so many notes. If both levers have to be held back to soften the accompaniment, how can they be used for accenting without the accompaniment becoming louder also? And I was told that it would make the tempo of the motor unsteady; but it does this in so slight a degree as to be negligible. The slightest turn of the tempo-lever instantly corrects it. Till we get the ideal player in which the motor is driven independently—a method advocated twenty years ago—this method of mine seems as safe as we can go in sensitiveness of response. The performer does very largely what he wants to do, and this grows with practice. Of course such manipulation calls for continual study, but that is where the fun comes in, and progress is quickly made. I always combat the dictum that it is less sensitive for the ordinary person, by saying that as his great difficulty is in playing a passage twice alike, he has to learn for and choose which way he likes it best, and the power to do so soon comes. He is exercising choice, even sub-consciously.

Mr. Newman makes a good point when he complains, as I have long done, that rolls are not 'barred.' Copyright cannot exist here, as all new music cut is paid for at royalties, and the old classics are surely so long out of copyright as to make that no defence, especially when a perfect mechanical device for it has been patented.

Mr. Newman has some good advice on the sustaining pedal, and complains, rightly, of its difficulty in the piano-player. I realised this difficulty, and made mine (both a extended leverage on my 'grand' and in extra case of spring in the pianola) so that I can work my pedal lever with the little finger. It is so light and instantly responsive as to seem to be broken. But pianofortes differ in their ease of adjustment in this direction.

I venture to disagree with Mr. Newman's theory that we should regard the piano-player as an instrument that should have music composed or arranged specially for it. This idea came about, I believe, from the difficulty of getting any real approach to the delicate grading of finger-playing. 'Accent in *pp* is impossible, &c.,' say some people. 'Give it up, then, and let us try only for what we can do—big, noisy orchestral arrangements.' Mr. Newman says the player can do so much more than ten fingers that rolls should be cut giving fuller transcriptions of orchestral pieces than the usual pianoforte arrangement. But if we go too far in this direction only noise will result: the labour, and the amount of air needed to make so many notes sound, preclude all delicacy or intimacy of rendering. One may as well ask six people to sit down to one pianoforte and play. I prefer music to musical noise, and the orchestral rolls I can really enjoy are very few and far between.

A great deal of pianoforte music is impossible on the pianola. The 'Reconnaissance' in Schumann's 'Carnaval' with its multitude of short repeated notes with a delicate melody over, is impossible of adequate interpretation by any

in he.' Phrasing of emotional sense is made *crea*, and the feeling of phrasing *rubato* of the less perfectly phrased almost the 'Forty-eight'ing, but must be could get on him. I do on mine advice. It is a serious grading to ever for his effort. In the nature of spring method, a marked increase is conferred on him. It was that all wind-chest, difficult method of fingers, as my reason of it. We have to know can they be becoming in the tempo of a degree, the tempo-ideal player—a method which seems as though this growth is for continual and progressive that it is that as his great he has to earn and the power choice, etc.

complains, all is paid for along out of it, especially when wanted.

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player-mechanism. The 'Pantalon' is equally impossible; so why ask for more notes to be cut when to be played at all they must be given *ff*?

In fact I refuse to regard my pianola as more than a substitute for fingers. I want to play my pianoforte, the pianola is merely the intermediary, and it must express me or I will have none of it. Monochrome renderings of polychrome orchestral works are so unsatisfactory that in cutting such rolls the ideal should always be the most pianistic rendering, a translation into the terms of the pianoforte, not the fullest rendering of the orchestral notes. Numberless works can be found containing quadruple shakes impossible to play properly with even any amount of noise. We must not forget it is the pianoforte we are playing: the player is merely a substitute for our fingers, and must be improved in that direction only, or else we shall falsify our beautiful instrument, the grand pianoforte. Of course there are cases where one can add notes impossible from stretch of fingers, e.g., bass octaves giving great depth. I frequently do this when cutting transcriptions from Bach's organ works; but even then one does not transcend the pianistic effect proper. It is these noisy orchestral renderings, plus the heavy spring and its turn-a-handle monotony of effect, that make the piano-player so often an intolerable nuisance to all—but the performer!—Yours, &c.,

32, Rosemont Road, FREDERICK H. EVANS.
Acton, W.3.

'EXTREMISTS VERSUS THE REST'

SIR.—May I be allowed, as a regular reader of your paper, to express regret that the pages devoted to 'Correspondence' should, in the December number, have been reserved for the petty quarrels of two of our leading musical critics. This section of the paper is surely intended to be a medium through which readers may express their views on music, or seek information, and ought not to be used by a critic for the purpose of saying what he thinks of another critic. This battle of wits has now been going on for some time, in various papers, and I feel sure that the musical public in general is beginning to be tired of it, and will agree with me in suggesting that your valuable space could be put to better use.—Yours, &c.,

J. N. G. ESCOMBE.

[We sympathise with Mr. Escombe's complaint, and while welcoming free and frank discussion, we must ask contributors and correspondents to bear in mind that they are disporting themselves in a forum, not in a prize ring.—ED., *M.T.*]

'SYSTEM IN MUSICAL NOTATION'

SIR.—Dr. Ferris Tozer is not entirely correct in supposing that I had not read Mr. Elliot Button's book. Actually, I have read at least a good part of it (unless my memory is gravely at fault) in past numbers of the *Musical Times*; but I admit that this was not in the least in my mind when I wrote my letter. I did not, indeed, set out to write a criticism of Mr. Button's work, but merely to make a comment suggested by an article in the *Musical Times* which happened itself to be a review of the book. However, if, as Dr. Tozer suggests, I have chosen 'two of the most convincing examples in the book' for criticism, no harm has been done. To attack a man's book at its strongest points gives, surely, little cause for complaint. Criticism deliberately directed against the weakest points might perhaps be regarded as carping.

In case, however, it might seem from Dr. Tozer's letter—if read alone—that I had written in depreciation of Mr. Button's work, I should like to say that I have since found an opportunity for looking through it (in complete form) and find much in it is valuable that—especially in the more elementary parts, about which there can of course be little dispute. The more contentious parts, too, are interesting and stimulating: but between saying this and agreeing with all Mr. Button states—and especially accepting all his various 'conditions'—there is a great gulf fixed.

Dr. Tozer makes a mistake, if I may say so, in appealing to the authority of Sir Edward Elgar. I rather doubt if Sir Edward would support everything Mr. Button writes;

but apart altogether from this, the great charm of Mr. Button's book lies in the youthful exuberance with which he throws overboard all authority altogether. He appeals not to authority, but to reason, system, and logic. (The very title of his work proclaims this.) To fall back, then, after all, on authority is rather to knock the bottom out of his case. Moreover, it leaves it open to me to make the obvious retort that if Mr. Button has Sir Edward Elgar on his side, I, at any rate, have Bach, Beethoven, and the rest of them, on mine!—Yours, &c.,

A. R. CRIPPS.

10, Ambrose Place, Worthing.
December 11, 1920.

VINCENT D'INDY'S VIEW OF HARMONY

SIR.—Mr. Thelwall will find M. d'Indy's demonstration of his Lower Harmonic series in vol. i, pp. 98, 99, of the 'Cours de Composition.' It is similar to that in Riemann's 'Harmony Simplified.' M. d'Indy, in his chapter 'The History of Harmonic Theories,' credits Zarlino with discovering (arithmetically) the true basis of the Minor Mode. Tarini and his resultant tones, and Arthur von Ettingen ('Harmoniesystem in Dualer Entwicklung') are the chief of the later supports he marshals. His last paragraph on p. 142 points to a hope in a physical demonstration of the whole lower series:

'Our ideas, our knowledge, and our nature itself are eminently modifiable if not perfectible, and who can deny that a theory like ours has a great chance of being true when it assembles in its favour all the distinguished minds whose laborious research we have just retraced? May each of us now verify it, absorb it, and still add to it by his personal toil of reflection and application.'

I ought to say that M. d'Indy does not call his lower harmonics 'partials.' The sentence Mr. Thelwall quotes ('If one cannot hear them in nature, one is to realise them "by second nature," &c.') was not a translation from M. d'Indy, nor was it given as such, though I think it fairly enough renders his teaching.—Yours, &c.,

London, December, 1920.

RICHARD CAPELL.

SIR.—In the *Musical Times* for December I see a letter from Mr. Walter Thelwall, in which he says:

'I am somewhat sceptical as to these multiple tones. . . . I hope that this letter may have the effect of eliciting evidence upon the subject.'

Has Mr. Thelwall tried the effect of playing the lowest note on the organ pedals with only a 16-ft. stop out, then adding the note a 5th higher? The lower octave of the C is then plainly audible. Is this not a proof—even to the unscientific—that these lower partials do exist?—Yours, &c.,

The Look-out, Clevedon.
December 1, 1920.

ENID PAYNE
(Mrs. Walter Morris).

'LETTERS OF GREAT COMPOSERS'

SIR.—I crave an inch of your valuable space to reply to Mr. F. Sinclair-Terras and Mr. R. B. Kettlewell, whose letters concerning my article appeared in the November and December numbers of the *Musical Times*. Mr. Terras has apparently misread me. The edition of Mendelssohn's letters he mentions is the identical one I possess, and from which my quotations were taken. I merely expressed a wish that some of our enterprising publishers of to-day who issue reprints of the world's classics would include a selection from the correspondence of Mendelssohn.

In reply to Mr. R. B. Kettlewell's reference to my not having treated of Brahms' letters, I may say that, from considerations of space, I confined myself to four selected composers. In a future article I hope to deal with a further four composers, when I shall certainly include the Herzogenberg correspondence of Johannes Brahms.—Yours, &c.,

323, Victoria Road,
Aston Park, Birmingham.
December 5, 1920.

WILLIAM PEARSON.

PERMANENT OPERA IN ENGLISH

SIR.—It was good to read in the *Musical Times* of November, Mr. Francis E. Barrett's interesting article on the desirability of establishing opera in English permanently in London, though the subject, one would have thought, was pretty well played out. He makes, however, one or two statements which are misleading. In discussing opera conditions on the Continent, and speaking of Italy, where for nearly all the year round I have resided for close on thirty years, he says that in this country 'over four-hundred companies tour.' Now during the period of my lengthy sojourn here I have never heard of such a thing as a touring opera company, and I think I may say I am fairly well in touch with matters musical in Italy. Operetta companies, giving such works as 'The Merry Widow,' 'The Waltz Dream,' and things of that class, go on tour, but a dozen companies is the maximum on the road, and this is a generous margin. Occasionally, but very occasionally, in past years a company with an opera that has had conspicuous success at the Scala or the Costanza has given a few representations in some of the most prominent cities of Italy, but such a thing as a touring company with a répertoire does not exist. The extraordinary effect produced by Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' as transferred to the stage after over sixty years' familiarity as an oratorio 'would not appear to have had a very potential effect on the public,' as, if I mistake not, except by the Moody-Manners Company, it has not been performed. Had the transplanting of the work from the concert-platform to the stage been greatly successful, surely steps would have been taken to include it in other 'Opera in English' Companies. I do not know Elgar's 'Caractacus,' but it by no means follows that a dramatic work in a concert-hall will prove effective when transferred to the trappings of the theatre. The late Augustus Harris is mentioned in the same article, and I cannot help thinking if permanent National Opera or Opera in English had been feasible, he certainly would not have neglected the opportunity to establish it.—Yours, &c.,

CLAUDE TREVOR.

Florence, Italy.

ELECTRIC ORGAN AT LOLINGEN, GERMANY

SIR.—I think it might interest some of your readers to know that during the course of eleven months spent with the Army of Occupation in Germany I had the privilege of playing an organ remarkably similar to that in the Lettish Church at Libau, described in a recent number of the *Musical Times*.

This particular organ is in the Lutheran Church at Loling, Germany, and is a three-manual instrument, the lower manual being the Great Organ, the centre one the Swell, the Echo Organ being at the top. The stops are ranged on either side, with three small pistons, coloured yellow, red, and black respectively, under each stop. By this elaborate arrangement, three distinct combinations can be prepared and brought into play by pressing the 'master-piston' of the required colour which is placed under the Great keyboard, together with a large number of combination pistons producing various 'shades' of tone, from *ff* to *tutti*, the latter giving the almost overwhelming power of the full organ.

In the case of this instrument, the india-rubber covered roller is placed just above, and runs the full length of, the pedal board, the indicator being on the player's right; the Swell and Echo pedals are of the 'balanced' type, and situated at the right-hand end of this roller.

The blowing is effected by a powerful electric-motor. The organ was erected by a firm of builders at Cologne. It is in the west gallery, and the performer sits with his back to it and facing down the church, the console when closed looking like a large roll-top desk.

I may add that I received every courtesy from the organist and church officials, and could practise at any time, a privilege of which, I need hardly say, I made full use.—Yours, &c.,

W. H. DOUGHTY.

12, Howard Road,
Upminster, Essex.

THE PRICE OF CLASSIC FIDDLIES

SIR.—On November 25 there appeared in the *Daily Express* an announcement that at a sale-room a 'Fine Strad Violin dated 1690' was to be sold, and that £5,000 was paid for the 'Emperor Strad' which Dr. Joachim pronounced to be the finest (presumably Strad) he had seen. So far very good; but the announcement went on to state that £10,000 had been offered for the Strad which Paganini left to Genoa. Surely an announcement like this can only be made through ignorance (to be charitable!) or a deliberate attempt to 'boost' up prices in order that unwary bidders may be induced to pay big money and so raise the fictitious value of these violins—fine as they are. Every violin connoisseur and student knows that Paganini's violin was not a Strad, but a Joseph Guarnerius, made in 1743, presented to him by M. Livron, a French merchant living at Leghorn. M. Livron was so entranced by Paganini's playing on it that he said no other fingers should touch it, and after the concert presented it to Paganini. At his death in May, 1840, Paganini bequeathed it to his native town Genoa, and it is preserved in a glass case in the museum there. On the same day that the announcement appeared I wrote to the *Daily Express* pointing out the error, and asking them in the interests of violin lovers to correct the statement, but as the matter has not been adjusted, although sufficient time has elapsed, I am writing to you in the hope that you will be able to find space in your interesting and widely-read magazine to insert this letter to warn intending purchasers against placing credence in announcements put in daily papers by vendors of violins.—Yours, &c.,

York Cottage, Frome.
December 8, 1920.

A. M. PORTER.

A CORNET WANTED

SIR.—Some time ago a disabled ex-service man came to our centre at Andover, Hants, suffering from a paralysed lip caused by gun-shot wound. He required treatment and training, and our vocal therapist took him in hand and taught him to play the cornet. This curative training has practically restored to the man the full use of his lip, and he is now quite an accomplished player.

He is anxious to continue to play his instrument, and I have been asked to write to you and learn if any of your readers would provide him with a cornet, thereby helping him to supplement his pension by playing in an orchestra, and also preventing his lip falling again into disuse.

I shall be glad to answer any questions regarding the case, and should one or other of your readers desire to make the gift, I shall be grateful if it is forwarded direct to me at this address. The cornet must be in B flat.—Yours, &c.,

(Capt.) J. MANCLARK HOLLIS
(Secretary).

The Village Centres Council,
10, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1.
December 1, 1920.

MR. STEPHENSON THE BANKER

SIR.—In my recently published 'Johann Sebastian Bach' I was able, by independent investigation, to make a guess that Samuel Wesley's associate 'Mr. Stephenson the Banker,' who translated Forkel's 'Johann Sebastian Bach' in 1820, was one Rowland Stephenson, a man of about forty in 1820, second son of John Stephenson (deceased before 1820), whom he succeeded before 1820 as active partner of the Lombard Street firm of bankers, Messrs. Remington, Stephenson, Remington, & Toulmin. In 1828 the firm was wound up in bankruptcy, and in 1829 Rowland Stephenson absconded to America. In *The News* of January 4, 1829, his father is named as 'of Great Ormonde Street, Queen Square.'

Dr. Grattan Flood has obligingly put into my hands evidence which seemingly conclusively confirms my investigation. He draws my attention to a letter of Samuel Wesley's, dated March 29, 1810, in which he invites his respondent to meet him on Sunday, April 1, at 'Queen Square, No. 29 [I think], for the purpose of celebrating the natal day of Sebastian Bach.' Whether Rowland Stephenson was in independent occupation of the Queen

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Street house, or whether his father was still living there is not determined. But the locality of the house clearly confirms my inference that this particular family of Stephensons was the one with whom Wesley was associated.

Rowland Stephenson was a widower in 1820, and of his eight children the eldest was also in the Bank. Rowland therefore was probably married later than 1810. Whether or no his father was deceased by that year, his tenancy of No. 29 (2), Queen Street in 1810 is equally explicable. On the other hand, until the precise date of John Stephenson's death is ascertained, it is not absolutely established whether he or his son was the 'most zealous and scientific member of our [Bach] Fraternity' to whom Samuel Wesley alludes in 1808 as the translator of Forke.

I propose to follow the investigation further, and to acquaint you with any positive results that may be attained.

—Yours, &c.,

C. SANFORD TERRY.

Obituary

We regret to record the death of EDWARD DE JONG, the celebrated flautist, at the age of eighty-three. In the course of his long career, which commenced at a 'prodigy' age, Mr. de Jong made the acquaintance of Liszt, took part (it is said) in the first performance of 'Tannhäuser' under Wagner, played obbligato for Jenny Lind, and played under August Manns at Amsterdam and Manchester. Settled at Manchester, he carried on a series of popular Saturday night concerts for twenty years. After this he was a musical organizer at Blackpool, Buxton, and Southport.

Sixty Years Ago

TO CHORAL SOCIETIES.—A 6½ Broadwood Grand Pianoforte, in good order; warranted. Price £12. Apply to J. S. Wells, Banbury.

Reduced Price, 8d.

D. MAINZER'S MUSIC BOOK FOR THE YOUNG.

PREFACE.

This little work has been prepared with a view to furnish Schools and Families with a complete set of Juvenile Compositions suitable for all circumstances. The Poetry has been written or selected with the greatest care: it treats of sacred and moral objects, and calls especially the attention of the young to the beauties of Nature.

Reduced Price, 8d.

D. MAINZER'S FIFTY MELODIES FOR CHILDREN.—Adapted for the use of Schools and Families.

PREFACE.

In preparing this, we had three principal points in view: 1st. To give to our little tunes such a compass that youthful and uncultivated voices can reach the extreme notes without effort.

2nd. To present the young with poetical sentiments within the reach of their intelligence.

3rd. To make these sentiments worthy to be kept in memory, so as to be used, in many circumstances of life, as guides of conduct and means of consolation.

Let it be well understood that these tunes are written for the school, and not for the church. From the school, children may bring them home, sing them in the street, in the field, or at the fireside. Grown-up persons may thus learn from children to sing what is worthy of their voice and their memory; and may learn to forget songs of other descriptions.

May it be, then, my young friends, your guide and companion; may these little tunes now instruct and now amuse you; may they teach you obedience and piety, and fill your hearts with joy and cheerfulness. May you learn, through them, to respect your school and your home, your

young friends and yourselves; and, to express all my wishes in one word, may they make you better while they make you happier.

THE AUTHOR.

STONEHOUSE.—In the early part of the last month the Plymouth, Devonport, and Stonehouse Choral Society produced Handel's oratorio, *Saul*, at the St. George's Hall, Stonehouse. . . . The solo performers, who acquitted themselves remarkably well, had the good sense to keep their names out of the programme—a most unusual thing for amateurs nowadays, who seem at all times anxious to bring their names before the public. . . .

THE THREE FAVORITE SONGS OF THE SEASON.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TIME. With Elaborate Title. Most respectfully dedicated to all classes of society. By E. C. CROGER, Author and Composer of

HURRAH! BRAVE VOLUNTEERS! Humbly and most respectfully dedicated to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and all the British Rifle Volunteers. Also,

WE WELCOME THEE BACK TO THY NATIVE SHORE. Most respectfully dedicated to Miss Florence Nightingale.

Each of the above songs is of that rare quality seldom to be met with—viz., simplicity and beauty; the melodies are truly original, so easy that when once heard they cannot be forgotten. The words are of that chaste description they may be read by all—from the youngest child to the most elderly lady or gentleman, and invariably leave on the mind a delightful sensation of mirth, nobleness, and virtue. Either of the above published at 2s. 6d.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

An interesting and extremely well varied programme of music was given at the chamber concert on November 17. A movement from Grieg's Sonata for violoncello and pianoforte, admirably played by Messrs. Frank Leonard and Roy Ellett, opened the concert, while the other concerted items included a MS. Sonata for violin and pianoforte by Herbert Haworth, two movements from Borodin's second String Quartet, played by a very well-balanced quartet led by Miss Gladys Chester, movements from a Bach Sonata for flute and pianoforte (Misses Mary Underwood and Joan Lloyd), and part of the Brahms Trio in E flat for pianoforte, violin, and horn, of which an excellent interpretation was given by Misses Nina North and Florence Lockwood, and Mr. John Orchard. The other instrumental items included a MS. Ballad in A flat for pianoforte, played by the composer, Mr. George F. Dodds, a student of considerable promise, and Liszt's Rhapsody No. 12, brilliantly played by Miss Audrey Goldstein. The vocal items were songs by Parry, Goring Thomas, and Elgar, also Sullivan's rarely heard 'Edward Gray,' of which Mr. Raymond Iles gave an excellent interpretation.

On Friday and Saturday evenings, November 26 and 27, two exceptionally good dramatic performances were given, under the direction of Mr. Acton Bond. The items were 'David Garrick,' and the one-Act play 'Op o' me thumb,' the cast being changed each evening. While the whole of the performances reflected very great credit upon the students and their teacher, special mention may be made of Mr. Douglas Pack as Squire Chivvy, Mr. H. Foden-Pattinson as Simon Ingott, Mr. George Thirlwell as David Garrick, and Misses Gwenhellen Russell and Vera Castell as Ida Ingott.

The usual terminal orchestral concert took place at Queen's Hall on Monday, December 6, and was conducted by Mr. Frederick Corder, who secured excellent interpretations of Sullivan's 'Overture to a Ball,' Dvorák's Variations for orchestra, and Saint-Saëns' symphonic poem 'Le Rouet d'Orphée.' The other items included the first movement from Beethoven's Pianoforte Concerto in C minor, played by Miss Betty Humby, and the *Finale* of Rachmaninov's Pianoforte Concerto, played by Miss Elsie Betts, both of whom showed themselves to be pianists of very considerable promise. Three interesting songs by Sylvia Carmine (student), Saint-Saëns' Ballad 'The Drummer's Betrothed,' and Mendelssohn's scena 'Infelice,' completed the programme.

Recent awards have comprised the following :
The Battison Haynes Prize (Composition)—Alan D. Bush (of London), Michael D. Head being commended. Adjudicator, Mr. Thomas F. Dunhill.
The Hine Gift (Composition)—Shula Doniach (Samara, Russia). Adjudicator, Mr. Alex Rowley.
The Sainton-Daly Prize (Contraltos)—Mabel Linwood (Eastwood, Notts), Dorothy Pattinson and Betty Thompson being highly commended, and Vera Creer commended. Adjudicators, Miss Elizabeth Davies and Madame Edith Hands.
The Philip L. Agnew Prize (Pianoforte)—Harry Isaacs (London), Arthur E. Temple being commended. Adjudicators, Messrs. William Murdoch and Philip L. Agnew.
The Walter Wilson Cobbett Prize (Ensemble Playing)—Gladys Chester, Israel Schluen, Nan Rees, and Lilly Phillips. Adjudicator, Mr. W. W. Cobbett.
The R.A.M. Club Prize (Composition)—Paul Kerby. Adjudicator, Mr. Eric Coates.
The Fred. Walker Prize (Sopranos)—Edith Rogers (South Wales). Adjudicator, Miss Evangeline Florence.
The Westmorland Scholarship (Male Vocalists)—Frank H. Nathan (Manchester). Adjudicators, Messrs. Marcus Thomson and Frederick Kest.
The Potter Exhibition (Female Pianists)—Hazel Perman (London), Doris Hobson being highly commended and Lillian Southgate and Kathleen Levi commended. Adjudicators, Messrs. Vivian Langrish, Lawrence Taylor, and Ambrose Coviello (chairman).

The Lent Term opens on Monday, January 10. On Wednesday, January 26, Dr. H. W. Richards will give his first lecture on 'History of Music from 1650 to 1750,' in which he will deal with the life and works of Henry Purcell. There will be illustrations by the choir under Mr. Henry Beauchamp.

INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS

The thirty-first annual Conference of the I.S.M. will open on Monday, January 3, with a soirée at Clothworkers' Hall.

On Wednesday morning, January 5, the members will meet at the Mansion House by invitation of the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor. Sir Edward E. Cooper will preside, and an address will be given by Sir Hugh P. Allen on 'Personality in Teaching.' In the afternoon, Prof. Donald F. Tovey will give a lecture-recital at University College.

In the evening an invitation concert will be held at Queen's Hall, when the English String Quartet will play quartets and Miss Olga Haley will sing.

On Thursday, January 6, the morning lecture will be by Mr. Frank Roscoe, on 'The Musician as a Teacher,' and in the afternoon Prof. A. Henderson will lecture on 'Psychology: its Importance in Education.'

The annual general meeting of members will be held on January 7, and the conference will conclude with a banquet at the Hotel Cecil.

Music in the Provinces

(BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS)

ABERDEEN

The various choirs and choral societies are at work, but so far the public has not been invited to taste of the fruit of these labours. Such music as we have been permitted to hear comes under the heading of imported. The Scottish Orchestra and the Fellowes String Quartet have given concerts, the expense of which was underwritten by local music-lovers, and in each case the support forthcoming was so encouraging that re-engagements have been entered into. Recitals have been given by Mr. Maren Thomson, an Aberdeen singer resident in London; by Messrs. T. E. Wright and Johann Blazer (pianoforte and violoncello), local professional musicians, and by Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Burnett (pianoforte and violin), a talented pair of amateurs to whom we were indebted for first hearings of the Elgar

and Goossens Sonatas. A Greek play done by graduates and undergraduates of the University was interesting in the musical sense, inasmuch as special music was written for it by Mr. W. G. Whittaker, of Newcastle. In spite of a somewhat inadequate performance of the orchestral score (the voice parts for females were beautifully sung), Mr. Whittaker's music created a most favourable impression.

For the time being grand opera is claiming public suffrage to the exclusion of almost every other form. At the time of writing we are enjoying a week's respite between visits of the O'Mara and Carl Rosa Companies. In the two weeks' season which the O'Mara Company has just concluded has been successful in every way, the performances being better and the audiences larger than any heretofore. We could always depend upon Mr. O'Mara for good principals, but on this occasion he has given us, in addition, excellent chorus-singing and a better standard of orchestral playing, improvements which are largely due to the Company's clever conductors, Mr. R. J. Forbes and Mr. Warwick Braithwaite.

BATH

Music during the past month was confined to the Pump Room performances, in their accustomed vigour and activity.

In addition to the usual daily popular concerts, on November 20 Miss Isolde Mengs (violin) and Miss Eileen Beattie (pianoforte) gave two recitals—solo and concerted; and on the evening of November 25 the programme was provided by the Bath Society of Gleemen, under the direction of Mr. A. Salter. On November 27 two very interesting concerts of modern British music were given, the artists being Miss Ursula Greville (vocalist) and Mr. Percival Garratt (pianoforte). The return visit of the Anna Pavlova Russian Ballet, on the three days November 30 to December 1, proved a great attraction. On December 9 two pianoforte recitals were given by M. Cernikoff, and on December 11 Miss Jean Sterling Mackinlay paid her eagerly-looked-for return visit with 'Old Songs and Ballads.'

In drawing up the programme for the usual weekly chamber concerts the object evidently is to embrace as wide a range as possible of the works of the old and more modern masters. November 25 was devoted to Mendelssohn, Weber, Strauss, and Schubert; Bach, Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Dvorak serving for December 8.

BELFAST

At the Philharmonic Society's second concert of the season on November 26, Coleridge-Taylor's 'Hiawatha's Departure' was the only concerted work performed, and choir and orchestra reflected credit on their careful training by the Society's conductor, Mr. E. Godfrey Brown. The soloists were Miss Clytie Hine, Mr. R. M. Kent, and Mr. Bateman—in the place of Mr. Murray Davey, who had been announced but did not fulfil his engagement. The rest of the concert comprised a happy miscellaneous selection of music, including for orchestra Sullivan's Overture 'Di Ballo,' two movements of Debussy's 'Petite Suite,' and (most interesting of all) a tone-poem, 'The Waters of Peneios,' composed and conducted by the accomplished 'cellist, Mr. Arnold Trowell. The work is a beautiful composition which will probably become a general favourite. Mr. Trowell also played with the orchestra Jules de Swert's Concerto No. 2, in C minor, and other pieces. Songs by the soloists completed an excellent programme.

The Belfast Symphony Orchestra continues to discourse excellent music under Mr. Godfrey Brown's baton. On November 27 the players were heard in Mr. Trowell's tone-poem mentioned above—when it was again conducted by the composer—and in Schubert's 'Unfinished' Symphony, Stanford's 'Shaun O'Brien' Overture, Handel's Largo in G, and Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance.' Mr. J. H. Gray played three movements of Mendelssohn's Concerto in E minor. Mr. John Vine completed the programme with songs by various composers.

On December 11 a concert by the same Orchestra included the Overture and Liebestod from 'Tristan and Isolde,' a movement from Tchaikovsky's 'Pathétique' Symphony, the 'Bamboula' dance of Coleridge-Taylor, and

by graduates interesting in the written for it. In spite of a orchestral scene beautifully sung, public suffrage. At the time between visits of the two weeks concluded his being better. We could principals, but ion, excellent stral playing, the Company's Mr. Warwick

Mascagni's *Intermezzo* from 'Cavalleria Rusticana.' Two novelties distinguished this concert—the first being a new orchestral work entitled 'Glendalough,' composed and conducted by the city organist, Mr. C. J. Brennan, and the second 'Deirdre's Lament,' for soprano voice and orchestra, composed by Mr. W. B. Reynolds, the musical critic of the *Belfast Telegraph*, an excellent musician whose criticisms are always appreciated by those competent to judge. Both works were greatly and deservedly admired, and it is most gratifying to see Belfast taking in the musical world so high a position in the master art of composition. A new Society called 'The Coleridge-Taylor Musical Society' of which Mr. Teesdale Griffiths is the conductor, gave two performances of 'Messiah' on December 10 and 11.

BIRMINGHAM

'The Dream of Gerontius' was performed by the Walsall Philharmonic Society at Walsall Town Hall on November 18, conducted by Mr. Appleby Matthews, who certainly scored a triumphant success, being admirably supported by choir, orchestra, and principals. Miss Astra Desmond, Mr. Gervas Elwes, and Mr. Charles Harrison rendered artistic help, and mention should also be made of Mr. T. W. North's valuable assistance at the organ. The orchestra comprised an important contingent of the City of Birmingham rank and file, with Mr. Alexander Cohen as leader.

The British Music Society's inaugural concert at the Royal Society of Artists' Gallery, on November 24, was honoured by the presence of the Lord Mayor of Birmingham (Mr. W. A. Caubury) and Dr. Egglefield Hull, the hon. director of the British Music Society. Some characteristic speeches were made, followed by a concert, the programme of which comprised Elgar's *Pianoforte Quintet* and a *Sonata* for violin and pianoforte, Op. 1, by Frank Martin. The performers were Miss Marjorie Sotham (pianoforte), Mr. John Bridge (1st violin), Mr. Frank Venton (2nd violin), Miss Grace Barrows (viola), and Mr. J. C. Hock (violin-cello). Mr. Hock also acted as musical director.

The Birmingham Festival Choral Society gave at the Town Hall, on December 1, a magnificent revival of Dvorák's dramatic cantata 'The Spectre's Bride,' which under Sir Henry Wood's direction reached the most poignant reading since its first production at the Birmingham Festival of 1885. The story, culled from Czech legends, has much in common with Burger's familiar poem 'Leoneore.' It may here be recalled that Raff wrote a symphony on the same subject, which one would like to hear again. It is true that the public taste has greatly changed since Dvorák gave the 'Spectre's Bride' to the world, and no doubt the ultra-modernists present on this occasion did not listen to it with the same appreciation that it aroused in the audience of 1885 and again in 1900. Nevertheless it still remains a work of great dramatic force and beauty. The fine singing of the principals—Miss Rita Delmar, Mr. Walter Hyde, and Captain Horace Stevens—contributed towards the success of the performances. Much local interest centred in the first hearing at Birmingham of Miss Dorothy Howell's orchestral tone-poem 'Lamia,' based on Keats' well-known poetic work. For one so young Miss Howell has achieved a composition that appeals to the imagination, showing inventive talent and a decided gift for orchestral colouring. Sir Henry Wood had admirably prepared the work, and it was enthusiastically greeted. The composer was present, and received an overwhelming reception from the audience.

The Midland Musical Society's Concert at the Town Hall on December 4, conducted by Mr. John Tyler in place of Mr. Cotton, provided an impressive and dramatically telling performance of 'The Golden Legend,' in which the principal artists were Madame Parkes-Darby, Miss Alice Vaughan, Mr. E. Ludlow, and Mr. Herbert Parker. A pleasing addition to the concert was Coleridge-Taylor's bright and melodious 'Bon-Bon' Suite. The choir throughout the evening was in excellent form. A crucial test was Bach's Motet for double choir, 'Be not afraid,' which this Society has often given in the past. Mr. Tyler had admirably prepared his forces, whose performance reflected credit upon themselves and their conductor.

Mr. Appleby Matthews' Sunday Evening Orchestral Concerts at the Theatre Royal continue to attract large and appreciative audiences. The programmes contain plenty of novelties, in addition to the Symphonies of the great masters. The City of Birmingham Orchestra has in Mr. Appleby Matthews a conductor who will go far, for he is an enthusiast and a capable musician.

A graphic interpretation of Elgar's 'King Olaf,' which greatly appealed to the audience, was given at the Town Hall on December 11 by the Birmingham Choral Union, under Mr. Richard Wassell's tactful and watchful conductorship. The principals were Miss Emily Broughton, Mr. Sidney Halliley, and Mr. Alfred Askey. The organist was Mr. C. W. Perkins. Choir and orchestra strongly elicited the sympathy of the audience.

BOURNEMOUTH

Bournemouth's music-lovers have little cause to complain of the quality of the programmes provided at recent Symphony Concerts. It is of course in the nature of all human effort that an occasional concert shall fall slightly below the level of the rest of the series of which it forms a part. But this is a rare occurrence—the day's programme usually contains some work that compensates for any sense of tedium that may be evoked elsewhere. Truly, Mr. Dan Godfrey has no easy task to fulfil in arranging programmes for a series of no less than thirty symphony concerts. At the very outset he is necessarily confronted with the difficulty of finding thirty symphonies alone that are worthy of occupying the central positions. The demand is almost greater than the supply: and in these days, when the composing of symphonies is far less popular than formerly, it suggests itself that possibly the substitution of two or three separate works of important proportions in lieu of the symphony in several movements will increasingly become the vogue.

The sixth Symphony Concert of the season—and the first to be noticed this month—will long be remembered as the occasion when the revised version of Vaughan Williams' 'London' Symphony was first performed at Bournemouth. Here at least—and that despite the dismal croakings of certain reactionaries of narrow view who assuredly one day will eat their words if only to conform with enlightened musical opinion—is a composition of a most impressive nature. Admittedly it is a work towards which some may feel unsympathetic, but even so only pity can be felt for those whose musical insensitivity blinds them to the fine sincerity, the noble idealism, and the idyllic imaginativeness of this always suggestive and often beautiful musical poem of moods. It is unquestionably one of the finest productions of recent times, and we should be proud that it is an Englishman who has added such a distinguished work of art to the list of symphonic compositions. Its performance was magnificent, and conductor and orchestra cannot be too highly complimented for an interpretation of such outstanding merit. Max Bruch's *Violin Concerto* in D minor, though played very persuasively by Mr. Julius Rosenthal, appeared an exceedingly dull and mechanical piece of writing after the elevated atmosphere of the Symphony.

The next week's concert opened with an unusually good performance of the 'Tannhäuser' Overture. This was followed by Mozart's lovely G minor Symphony—a work of rare and sustained beauty—and the clever 'L'Apprenti Sorcier' Scherzo by Dukas. Josef Holbrooke's poem for pianoforte and orchestra, 'The Song of Gwyn ap Nudd,' was played with moderate success by Miss Rita Neve.

The programme on November 25 was not altogether well-balanced. Granville Bantock's delicate and picturesque comedy overture, 'The Pierrot of the Minute,' is not at all, so to speak, Bantockian. In its clarity and economy of means it is more akin to the French school, and one felt the lack of contrast when it was succeeded by Debussy's beautiful 'L'Après-midi d'un Faune' Prelude. Also, it is impossible to wax enthusiastic over Berlioz's dreary 'Harold in Italy' Symphony, which may have interest from the historical standpoint, but has little to commend it regarded purely as music. The solo viola part, however, lost nothing at the hands of that reliable artist, Mr. Theo. de la Rivière. Karl Reinecke's *Harp Concerto*, again, is not an

inspired work; but the two movements heard at this concert were admirably performed by Miss Jacoba Wolters, Bournemouth's exceedingly talented harpist.

An exceptionally interesting programme was submitted on December 2. It opened with Chabrier's fine 'Gwendoline' Overture, to which succeeded Rimsky-Korsakov's ingenious and effective Sinfonietta on Russian Themes. Glazounov's Pianoforte Concerto in F minor, a composition in which brilliance and scholarship are cleverly combined, was another enjoyable feature, the solo music being splendidly performed by Mlle. Juliette Folville, now an established favourite with local audiences. Finally there was the first revival since the war of a work by Richard Strauss—the 'Tod und Verklärung' tone-poem. There is no doubt about the magnificence of some of the passages in this score, but it is not the equal of 'Till Eulenspiegel' or of the earlier 'Don Juan,' both of which would now well bear revival. The whole of this exacting programme was carried out in exemplary fashion, and greatly to the satisfaction of the audience.

The writer, owing to indisposition, was unable to attend the tenth concert, on December 9, the programme of which comprised the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' Overture, Brahms' second Symphony, a Rhapsody for violin and orchestra by W. H. Reed (soloist, Miss Jessie Snow), and a symphonic poem, 'The Seekers,' by Paul Kerby (conducted by the composer). The last two works were novelties to Bournemouth.

BRISTOL

Concerts crowd upon us. Their financial success is doubtful, but they certainly have been artistic successes, and have given Bristolians such a feast as the city had not had for many years until the influx last season. Among the principal events have been the annual Police Orphanage concerts on November 17, when the full Grenadier Guards Band, under Capt. Williams, gave a typical programme, including the '1812' Overture and the conductor's own skilfully constructed 'Patrols.' Madame Elsa Stralia sang several operatic solos.

A very careful performance of the Prelude and Grail scene from 'Parsifal,' by the Bristol Choral Society, under Mr. George Riseley's judicious direction, also at Colston Hall, drew a large and appreciative audience on November 20, with Mr. Percy Heming—a Bristol baritone who has been much heard of in London—as Amfortas, and Mr. Robert Radford doubling the parts of Tituré and Gurnemanz. The miscellaneous second part of the programme included Boris' Song from Moussorgsky's opera, magnificently sung by Mr. Radford, the fine double chorus, Horatio Parker's 'Horn Novissima,' and a unique concession by Mr. Riseley, who permitted an encore and allowed Mr. Heming to repeat the second verse of the 'Toreador's Song.'

On November 22, the second 'international celebrity' concert was the occasion of a first visit from Miss Stella Power, with Miss Leila Megane, Mr. Jean Gerardy, and Miss Adela Verne.

The first of the Bristol Municipal Concerts, the series of organ recitals on the great Colston Hall organ, drew a tremendous evening audience and a fairly good afternoon gathering to hear Mr. Alfred Hollins give exhibitions of his delightful playing. Mendelssohn, Bach, and Sibelius were drawn upon to the very great pleasure of his hearers.

The second Quinlan concert, on November 27, drew a splendid house at Colston Hall, to hear an extraordinary programme supplied by Mlle. Renée Chemet, M. Rosing, Miss Tilly Koenen, and Mr. George Curzon. So many were the encores that the programme lasted far beyond its allotted time.

Mr. Arnold Barter and his New Philharmonic Society gave a highly interesting programme of modern music on December 4 at Colston Hall, including Delius' Rhapsody on 'Brigg Fair,' Prof. Walford Davies' 'Five Sayings of Jesus,' Grainger's 'Brigg Fair,' and Hurlstone's 'Alfred the Great' Ballad, with very fair success. Miss Irene Scharrer played Schumann's Concerto in A minor with the orchestra, and several Chopin studies.

The second Max Mossel concert, on December 7, like the International, was but poorly attended, though Miss Margaret Balfour, Mr. John Coates, M. Arthur de Greef,

and Mr. Mossel gave a most pleasing programme, which left only regrets that more people could not have heard it.

On December 11, the Cecilian Choral Society, of about two hundred voices, gave with their usual care, at Colston Hall, under Mr. Charles Read, Coleridge-Taylor's 'Hiawatha,' before an interested audience of friends from Messrs. Fry's, from whose Bristol works the choir is recruited.

The third 'international celebrity' concert, on December 13, was a 'surprise' night. Mlle. Graziella Pareto, Mr. Dins Gilly, M. Bratza, and M. Claudio Arrau, came down to take part in a programme that included the 'Shadow Song' from 'Dinorah,' Massenet's 'Vision' from 'Herodiade,' Wieniawski's 'Faust' fantasia, and Debussy's 'Cathédrale Engloutie.' It is the finest 'four' we have yet had at Bristol.

CORNWALL

The West Cornwall Musical Society is flourishing, and Beethoven afternoon at Redruth on November 20 comprised Sonatas for pianoforte (Miss Mary Wright), for pianoforte and violin (Miss Margery Holden), Pianoforte Trio in C minor (Miss Edith Blight, Mrs. Twite, and Miss Treweke), and songs.

Mount Hawke Guild has organized a series of sacred concerts for Saturday evenings, and on December 4 a programme of organ solos (Mr. H. Carveth), songs, and duets was successfully given.

At Marazion a large united choir has been formed of Nonconformist Chapel choirs, and, under Mr. J. H. Trudgeon, has begun to practise 'Messiah.' Mousehole Male Choir (Mr. Fred Roach), sang 'Martyrs of the Arena' and 'Destruction of Gaza' (de Rille), 'Comrades in Arms,' and 'To Arms' on December 3. Penlee Male Choir (Mr. W. Richards) and Gunnislake Male Choir (Mr. W. Leverton) gave concerts on December 3 and 4 respectively, and on the latter occasion Elgar's 'As Torrents in Summer' and Cooke's 'Strike the Lure' were performed.

On December 1 St. Budeaux Baptist Choir (Mr. W. J. Angle) celebrated its twenty-first annual festival by performing the cantata 'Saul of Tarsus.' Redruth Musical Society on December 2 gave a good performance of 'Elijah.' Mr. N. Clemens conducted a choir of a hundred voices and a good orchestra, Mr. Joseph Farrington coming from St. Paul's Cathedral to sing the bass solo. 'Messiah' was performed at Launceston on December 2, Mr. C. S. Parsonson conducting an orchestra and a choir numbering over a hundred voices. The chief principals were Miss Jon Ashley and Mr. Frederick Taylor (vocalists).

Wadebridge Choral Society closed a goo! autumn's work with an excellent performance on December 10 of Van Bree's 'St. Cecilia's Day,' Cowen's 'Wedding Chorus,' R. H. Herbert's 'Woodland Chorus' for female voices, and other items. Mr. H. S. Derry conducted.

COVENTRY AND DISTRICT

At a special matinée at the Hippodrome, on November 20, M. Shapiro, the well-known pianist, appeared. On the evening of the same day, Coventry Choral Society gave its second concert of the season at the Baths Assembly Hall. The programme was of great local interest. It included the 'Ballad of Semmerwater' (Bainton) and 'The Death of Morar' (Granville Bantock), which formed the test-pieces at the recent Leicester Festival, at which the Society secured first prize. 'In Celia's face my Heaven is' (Julius Harrison), the words of which are by a well-known local politician, was also in the programme. Throughout the evening the choir was in good voice. The soloists were Miss Dorothy Lycett and Mr. Barker Beaumont (vocalists), and Miss Winifred Small (violin). Mr. John Potter conducted.

'Elijah' was sung in the Cathedral by Coventry Philharmonic Society on November 25 in the presence of a vast assembly. The work of the choir, which numbered a hundred and twenty, was most satisfactory, the choral technique showing great improvement upon that manifested last season. Mr. Charles Matthews conducted. Mr. Walter Hoyle was at the organ, and in addition a string orchestra

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The following evening marked the first concert of the 'Rover' Orchestra at the Albany Road Hall. This organization, conducted by Mr. W. R. Clarke, consists of thirty-six members recruited from all over the city. The ambitious initial programme embraced movements from the 'Surprise' Symphony (Haydn), the 'Ballet Egyptien' (Lugini), 'Henry VIII.' ballet music (Saint-Saëns), and the march from 'Tannhäuser.' Vocal assistance was lent by Miss Maud Coleman and Mr. Ernest Maher.

On November 27, under the leadership of Mr. S. J. Wisdom, the Armstrong-Siddeley Male-Voice Choir gave a well-varied programme at Parkside.

Coventry Co-operative Select Choir, under Mr. Alfred Petty, gave a concert at the Baths Assembly Hall on December 4, when Madame Edna Thornton was the principal soloist.

Leamington has recorded a number of musical events during the past month. Leamington Male-Voice Choir gave an interesting programme at the Town Hall on November 18, when Mr. Geoffrey Gibls conducted part-songs which included the test-piece 'Sacramentum Supremum' (Dr. F. H. Wood), with which the Choir won first prize at the recent Leicester Festival. Mr. Robert Radford (vocalist) and Mr. John Snowden (violincello) were the soloists.

Leamington Orchestral Society, conducted by Mr. Walter Warren, held its first concert of the season at the Town Hall on November 20. The programme included the 'Unfinished' Symphony. Miss Megan Foster was the soloist.

Rugby Philharmonic Society, at its concert at the Temple Speech Room, Rugby School, on the same evening, sang Brahms' 'Song of Destiny,' Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens,' and Stanford's 'The Revenge.' Mr. A. H. Peppin, musical director at Rugby School, conducted, and Mr. Steuart Wilson was the soloist.

DARLINGTON AND DISTRICT

Chamber music is flourishing, and we have already had two concerts at Polum Hall School. The first, on October 28, was a 'cello and pianoforte recital by the Misses Hetty and Ethel Page, with Miss Elsie Chambers. The principal works were Sonatas by Saint-Saëns and Sammartini. On November 25 the London Philharmonic Quartet played Beethoven in E minor, Dvorák's 'Nigger' Quartet, and 'Puck' and 'Queen Mab,' by Speaight, the latter being great favourites with the audience.

Middlesbrough is being well supplied with music this season. The Corbett Ballad Concerts are as popular as ever. At the first the notable feature was a superb performance of the César Franck Sonata in A, by M. Cortot and Miss Isolde Menges, the latter coming in place of M. Jacques Thibaud. Madame Calvé appeared at the same concert, and fascinated her audience, but Mr. Joseph Hislop hardly fulfilled the expectations aroused by preliminary announcements that described him as the greatest English tenor since Sims Reeves. At the second concert M. Rosing caused something like a sensation by his wonderfully dramatic singing. Mr. Arthur Rubinstein, Mlle. Renée Chemet, and Mr. George Curzon completed the cast.

The Middlesbrough Musical Union, under Dr. Kilburn, gave a chamber concert at which the Philharmonic Quartet provided the programme, with Miss Dorothy Helmrich as vocalist and Mr. Paul Kilburn as accompanist. A novel and interesting feature of this concert was the accompanying of a group of Purcell songs by the string quartet with charming effect. On December 8 a choral concert was given at the Town Hall with the assistance of the Leeds Symphony Orchestra. The programme was miscellaneous, and included Goring Thomas' 'Sun-worshippers,' Dr. Kilburn's finely conceived and well-developed setting of the 23rd Psalm, and 'Hiawatha's Wedding-Feast.' The choir is rapidly recovering its old form, and sang with brilliance in the first two works, but was not quite so much at home in the last. The vocalists were Miss Agnes Nicholls and

Mr. Herbert Teale. One of the best and most enthusiastic societies in the North is the Auckland Musical Society, which is also conducted by Dr. Kilburn. The programme was the same as at Middlesbrough, but the choir on the whole had its work better prepared, and gave an inspired reading of the 'Hiawatha' music that caught all its quaintness and rhythmic flow.

The Darlington Choral and Orchestral Society is practising Bach's 'Christmas' Oratorio, although, for lack of a suitable hall, public performances are suspended for a time.

DEVON

Ottery St. Mary Choral Society, on November 24, performed Sterndale Bennett's 'May Queen' and selections from 'Faust,' Mr. Stanley Chipperfield conducting. The principals were Miss Fifi de la Côte, Mr. Rowland Hushe, and Mr. Walter Belgrave.

Madrigal singing of a high standard was heard at Plymouth on November 17 from the Plymouth Madrigal Society, conducted by Dr. Harold Lake, who included in the programme one of his own Madrigals, a charming 'To Daftodils.' Other examples were by Roger Quilter, 'Gather ye Rosebuds,' Wilbye, 'Flora gave me fairest flowers,' Gibbons, 'I tremble not,' a six-part song by Arthur Somervell, 'In Honour of Music,' and part-songs by Cui, 'Two Roses,' and 'Wi a Hundred Pipers,' arranged by John E. W.-st. M. Arthur de Greef (pianoforte), Mr. Louis Godowsky (violin), and Miss Louise Trenton (vocalist), contributed to the success of the programme. Mr. Percy E. Butchers' Plymouth Ladies' Choir has made rapid strides, though yet having much to learn in technique. At the concert on December 1, advance was seen in the selection of music, which included Parry's 'Dreams,' Charles Wood's 'Cowslips for her covering,' Cyril Jenkins' 'Storm Song,' 'What means this sadness,' from Moussorgsky's opera, 'Salammbô,' C. H. Lloyd's 'Song of the Forest Fairy,' and a 'Lullaby' by W. W. Starmer. Dr. Ernest Bullock, organist of Exeter Cathedral, gave classical importance to the programme by his organ solos, and Miss Myra Hess played Scarlatti and Chopin music exquisitely.

Plymouth Orpheus Male Choir (Mr. David Parkes) has sung in company with Miss Stella Power and Messrs. Bratza and Claudio Arrau, on November 18, and with Dame Melba, Lionel Tertis, and Dorothy Murdoch on December 2. Chiefly memorable were the electrical readings of two pieces by MacDowell—the 'Dance of the Gnomes' and 'Hush! hush!—Fletcher's 'Lorraine, Lorree,' and Davies' 'The Winds.' Dame Melba had a great reception, and sang charmingly here, also at Torquay on December 4. Messrs. Bratza and Arrau gave a violin and pianoforte recital at Torquay on November 20.

Barnstaple Orchestral Society is only in its second year, but is doing remarkably good work under the conductorship of Mr. Sydney Harper. Its scheme of serial concerts on Saturdays deserves full support. The programme on November 13 contained Schubert's 'Unfinished' Symphony and an Allegro and Scherzando by Moussorgsky.

Devonians are glad to have the band of the Royal Marines, Plymouth Division, among them again, after the two memorable tours of this organization in attendance on the Prince of Wales. On the Sunday after Armistice Day they gave a concert at Plymouth, conducted by Mr. P. S. G. O'Donnell, that included Chopin's Funeral March and Sullivan's 'In Memoriam' Overture, and the 'Hymne héroïque à la France,' played with intense feeling. Lighter numbers were by Coleridge-Taylor, Massenet, and Foulds.

Dr. Weekes' Orchestral Society, at Plymouth, on December 8, played a new 'Miniature Overture' by Gerald Phillips, a gifted local composer, Mendelssohn's 'Italian Symphony,' and Handel's Organ Concerto, with Dr. Harold Lake at the organ.

Chamber music has received considerable recognition during the month. It was introduced into the Plymouth Corporation Popular Concerts on December 4, when string quartets by Tchaikovsky and Rheinberger were played by Mr. R. Ball, Dr. H. Lake, Mr. H. Moreton, and Miss Winifred Blight. On the same date Miss Aleck (pianoforte) and Mr. Otto Milani gave the first of a proposed series of recitals for the musical education of the

scholars at Maynard College, Exeter, playing a Sonata by Beethoven for the two instruments, also music arranged for violin by Wilhemj, Joachim, and Kreisler, and pianoforte music by Chopin, Brahms, Balfour Gardiner, and Leschetitzky. Exeter Chamber Music Club, initiated by Dr. Ernest Bullock, has already a membership of a hundred and seventy, and its first music-making on December 8 was an excellent send-off. A Brahms Sonata for pianoforte and violin, violin music by Tartini, Kreisler, and Hellendaal (c. 1725), concertato vocal music by Edwards, Wilby, Charles Wood, and Mozart, and solo vocal music by Stanford, Elgar, Schubert, and Beethoven, comprised the programme.

Exeter and District Organists' Association has had two sessional meetings. At the first, in November, Mr. Lancelot Holden read a paper on 'Choral Technique,' and at the second, on December 11, the meeting adjourned to the Cathedral, where Dr. Bullock gave a recital, playing Howells' Rhapsody No. 2, Prelude 'In Te, Domine, Speravi,' (Hathaway), Choral Preludes by Brahms, Bairstow, and Karg-Elert, and Elgar's Sonata in G.

DUBLIN

The Dublin musical season for the second half of November was unusually brilliant. Only brief reference was made last month to the very interesting classical recital at the Royal Dublin Society on November 15, when Dr. Esposto and Dr. Brodsky, with Mr. Frank Park and Mr. Walter Hatton, co-operated in very adequate interpretations of ancient and modern compositions, the Elgar selection being charmingly interpreted. Another fine recital was given on November 22, when Miss Lord and Mr. Joan Munly exhibited old and new styles. The Sonata by Henry Eccles (1722) and Mendelssohn's Sonata, Op. 45, were much appreciated.

Mr. Thomas H. Weaving is to be congratulated on the concert of the Aeolian Musical Society on November 18, and his selection of old-established favourites, including Stanford's 'Phaethon Crohoore,' found much favour. Miss Nancy Lord played some agreeable violin selections, while Mr. Joseph O'Neill gives promise of future success as a tenor.

Another 'Mater' concert by the Dublin Symphony Orchestra was given at La Scala Theatre on November 21, under the direction of Mr. Vincent O'Brien. Among the vocal attractions were Miss Eda Bennie, Mr. Frank Clark, and Mr. Harrison Cook, while Mr. Wynn Reeves played three violin solos. Miss Lucy Leemane was an admirable accompanist.

The Irish Society of Composers afforded an enjoyable entertainment at 37, Charlemont Street, on November 18, the principal novelty being a String Quartet by Mr. Mclyneux Palmer. Some varied songs were well interpreted by Miss Mary Maguire.

At the Theatre Royal, on November 27, Miss Madalene Mooney gave a violin recital, assisted by Mr. Percy Whitehead, with Mrs. Boxwell at the pianoforte. Miss Mooney plays with a fine tone and good expression, and her selections were off the beaten path.

In connection with the Royal Dublin Society's recitals, the fare provided on November 29 and December 6 was excellent. On the first occasion the Catterall combination gave unmixed satisfaction to a large audience, while the latter *musicale* (as trans-Atlantic critics would say) afforded the opportunity for welcoming an Irish composer, Mr. Hamilton Harty, as conductor. In particular, Holbrooke's Sextet was very welcome, though not one of his more mature works.

Dr. Grattan Flood's long expected memoir of 'John Field of Dublin, Inventor of the Nocturne,' has just been published by Martin Lester, Ltd., Dublin. The edition is limited to four hundred and fifty copies, printed from hand-set type, since distributed.

EDINBURGH

The outstanding feature of this month's news has been the Paterson Orchestral Concerts.

On November 15 Heifetz made his first appearance at Edinburgh, selecting Tchaikovsky's Concerto in D, he held his audience spellbound. Elgar's 'Polonia' Prelude,

Humperdinck's 'Hänsel and Gretel,' and the 'Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla,' by Wagner, completed an excellent programme. Mr. Landon Ronald conducted, and there was no sign of the orchestra merely working into form; the players started off their season with a high standard of performance.

At the second concert, on November 22, M. Backer-Gröndahl, the Norwegian pianist, gave a clear exposition of Grieg's Concerto in A minor, and a Haydn Symphony, No. 13, in G, was a sheer delight. These classics wear well. 'The Garden of Allah' Suite, by Landon Ronald, and Gardiner's 'Shepherd Fennel's Dance,' also proved popular items.

On November 20 Mr. Julius Harrison, who is training the orchestra, took Mr. Landon Ronald's place as conductor. So far as we have yet seen, his predilections are purely modern. His conducting of Scriabin's 'Poème de l'Extase' was very convincing, and he secured a very fine reading. Miss Mignon Nevada in 'The Willow Song' from 'Otello' was the gem of the evening.

Mr. Harrison also conducted the fourth concert, on December 6, when the novelty was Malipiero's Suite, 'Impressioni dal Vero' (Set 2). It cannot be said that the audience was impressed. 'The Bells,' No. 1 of the set, and 'The Bonfire,' were obviously received with considerable amusement. Miss Myra Hess gave a wonderful reading of César Franck's 'Variations Symphoniques' for pianoforte and orchestra. The plasticity of her rhythm and facility in performance were really a revelation in such a work. Mozart's Symphony in E flat, Smetana's 'Bartered Bride' Overture, and Holbrooke's 'Queen Mab' Scherzo completed, at the time of writing, the most interesting concert of the series.

On November 17 the Royal Choral Union gave a performance of Mendelssohn's 'Hymn of Praise,' Elgar's 'For the Fallen,' Beethoven's Choral Fantasia (with a local pianist, Mr. Ramsay Geikie), and Gustav Holst's setting of Psalm 86 and Psalm 147. Of these last named numbers, which were given for the first time at Edinburgh, Psalm 86 proved particularly impressive. The exceedingly clever contrapuntal treatment of the second example was interesting, but the general effect was not so uplifting. The soloists were Miss Dorothy Silk, Mrs. John Walker, and Mr. Arthur Jordan.

On the same evening Mr. Appleyard gave a pianoforte recital. A pupil of Leschetitzky, he does great credit to his teacher.

On November 25, Miss Marjorie Greenfield (vocalist) assisted by Miss Dorothy Chalmers (violin) gave a very interesting chamber concert. Miss Chalmers, accompanied by Miss Isobel Gray, gave a fine reading of Brahms' D minor Sonata, Op. 108, and Miss Greenfield covered a wide range of vocal art.

Mr. John Petrie Dunn, assistant-lecturer with Prof. Tovey at Edinburgh University, is an accomplished pianist. On December 7—in co-operation with Mr. Watt Jupp (violin) and Mr. Bernard Beers (violincello)—he gave a fine programme. The Trios were Beethoven's Op. 70, No. 1, and Variations, Op. 121.

On December 9, M. Backer-Gröndahl gave a pianoforte recital, and strengthened the impression he made at the orchestral concert already referred to.

GLASGOW

There has been a good deal of more than usual interest in this month's music. The playing of Jascha Heifetz drew a very crowded audience to the first Classical Concert on November 16. His wonderful technique and beautiful tone were exhibited in Tchaikovsky's Concerto (Op. 53). The first performance here of Landon Ronald's 'The Garden of Allah' was given on November 20, and was well received, especially the richly scored last movement, which made the strongest impression. At the same concert the Norwegian pianist M. Backer-Gröndahl played the solo part in Grieg's Piano-Forte Concerto in A minor, but without great distinction. On November 30 the Choral Union co-operated with the Scottish Orchestra in an exceedingly fine reading of 'The Dream of Gerontius.' Mr. Warren Clemens, who conducted the performance, had evidently taken the greatest

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pains in preparing the choruses, and the Union responded splendidly, giving probably the best performance of Elgar's noble work we have yet had at Glasgow. The solo music was in the safe hands of Miss Olga Haley, Mr. Robert Watson, and Mr. John Coates, the last named singing his part entirely from memory. The Scottish Orchestra did full justice to the instrumental part. The Saturday Popular audience of December 4 had the benefit of a first performance here of Scriabin's 'Le Poème de l'Extase,' and in response to a widely expressed demand, the work was repeated at the Classical Concert on December 7. Music of this kind will compel concert-goers to revise their standards as measured by the works of classical composers. There is no doubt that 'Le Poème' was listened to attentively and heartily received, but one doubts if many of the audience—apart from a satisfied curiosity and an appreciation of an adequate interpretation by the Scottish Orchestra, under Mr. Julius Harrison—could give perfectly satisfactory reasons for their prolonged applause. At the same concert there was the antithesis of Scriabin in Mozart, as represented by his Symphony in E flat. César Franck's Symphonic Variations for pianoforte and orchestra (the solo part brilliantly played by Miss Myra Hess), Josef Holbrooke's tone-poem, 'Queen Mab,' and Smetana's Overture to 'The Bartered Bride,' completed the programme. The performance of Scriabin's work on November 30 somewhat overshadowed the Choral Union's share of the programme, which consisted of Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens,' and a first performance here of Ernest Austin's 'Hymn to Apollo.' Both choral works were sung with good effect under Mr. Clemens' baton. A Tchaikovsky programme, which included the 'Casse Nisette' Suite, the 'Pathétique' Symphony, and the Pianoforte Concerto No. 1, in B flat minor (magnificently played by Miss Adela Verne), drew, as was to be expected, a huge audience to the Saturday Popular Concert on December 11.

The Glasgow Orpheus Choir has now what is probably a unique record among the city's musical organizations in that it crowded St. Andrew's Hall on four evenings in one week, singing the same choral programme each evening. The popularity of the Choir is thoroughly merited, for under Mr. Hugh S. Robertson it seems to have reached the summit of perfection in choral interpretation. The programme ranged from a simple psalm tune to Bantock's marvellous setting of the Hebridean 'Sea Sorrow,' and in each mood and style the Choir's performance (entirely from memory) reached the highest level. Special mention should be made of Mainzer's setting of 'French' (sung to two verses of the metrical version of Psalm 103), in which the old-time embellishments of the melody and the preliminary intoning of each line by the 'precentor' (charmingly done by a member of the tenor section of the Choir), made a specially moving appeal to a Scottish audience. Vocal solos were effectively given by members of the Choir.

HASTINGS

The laudable ambition of the Hastings Corporation to place the town in the front rank of pleasure resorts—musically at otherwise—is rapidly materialising. A decided step in this direction was made on November 18, when Mr. Julian Clifford secured the first provincial performance of Montague Phillips' new Pianoforte Concerto—one of the smaller sensations of the recent 'Proms.' Whatever the impression it made then, it was most warmly received here, for its instant appeal is undeniable. Planned on a grandiose scale, it bristles with difficulties, of which no more capable exponent than Mr. William James could be desired; while the orchestra, which practically 'read' the work, entered into its intricacies with might and main, under the composer's safe guidance. The same concert offered the 'Unfinished' and a really stirring account of Rimsky-Korsakov's 'Caprice Espagnole.' Mr. W. H. Reed played Beethoven's Violin Concerto as only a true disciple of Joachim could, for he has all the essential qualities of a Beethoven player. Moszkowski's Pianoforte Concerto, played by Miss Helen Guest with facile execution, but with not the best pedalling, was heard here for the first time. Miss Lena Kotorovitch was alternately passionate and tender in Saint-Saëns' Violin Concerto, where she found

many openings for the exercise of her surprisingly intense temperament.

Of the Russian symphonies recently played by Mr. Clifford—Tchaikovsky in E minor, Kalinnikoff in G minor, and Glazounov in C minor—the last-named towered above its companions, both in nobility of thought as well as for its masterly reading. Among such things as the 'Laonore,' 'Fidelio,' and 'Midsummer Night's Dream' Overtures, Dvořák's Slavonic Dances, and Moussorgsky's 'Goyak,' the Mendelssohn was particularly well done. A brilliant and thoroughly sound exposition of Tchaikovsky's Pianoforte Concerto in B flat minor was given by Mr. Julian Clifford at his pianoforte recital on December 4, when he also played Bach, Chopin, and some charming little things of his own. Since then this versatile musician has given a lecture on 'The Orchestra,' with illustrations by his own players, which was largely attended by the many girls' schools hereabout.

An enterprising local lady, Mrs. Allan Kidney, who is the first European to collect the native music of Nyassaland, had many of those interesting songs performed here on November 15. They had recently formed the basis of a Gresham lecture, and have since been warmly greeted at a meeting of the African Society. Mrs. Kidney's labours deserve wide recognition, for not only did she spend several years in noting down the music, but she has also translated the words so that the songs may be sung in English. She observed, among other curious traits in the natives, a marked aptitude for absolute pitch.

At Christ Church, St. Leonards, the Advent organ recitals by Mr. Allan Biggs are more than usually attractive, and they include Bach's Toccata in F, the Fantasie and Fugue in G minor, and Reubke's C minor Sonata. At St. John's, Mr. Leonard O'Conor conducted expressive interpretations of Bach's 'Fide with us' and Schumann's Advent Hymn, Dr. W. H. Speer being at the organ. Miss Churton's chamber concerts at Bexhill have been singularly enjoyable.

Sir Frederick Bridge's arrangement of Gibbons' 'Cries of London,' accompanied by Miss Kenwood's string quartet, were well sung by the Hastings Madrigal Society on November 30, but more might have been made of their inherently humorous side.

KENT

Wateringbury Choral Society gave a concert—the first this season—on December 1 in aid of the West Kent General Hospital, the chief work performed by the Society being Anderton's 'The Wreck of the Hesperus.' Mr. Edgar A. Clarke-Smith conducted.

Interest in Faversham on November 25, 26, and 27 centred in the first performance of an original comic opera, entitled, 'A Poet of Rome,' for which the music was composed by Mrs. Herdman Porter, of Faversham. The performances were given by local amateurs, under the direction of Mr. Frank Shrubsole, who played the title rôle.

Sittingbourne and Milton Carol Singers, who form a choir of a hundred, gave a concert at Sittingbourne on November 29. Mr. H. S. Welsh, the Society's conductor, arranged a well-varied programme of part-songs and solo vocal and instrumental items.

Madame Emily Hinning's students gave their annual concert at Chatham on December 8, in which they were assisted by the Kent Ladies' Choir, which sang part-songs by Coleridge-Taylor, Elgar, and Fletcher. Madame Hinning conducting. Of the fifteen students who sang, none showed more than ordinary ability or attainment.

Maidstone Choral Union concert attracted the usual large audience on December 14, when the Union gave part-songs under the conductorship of Mr. F. Wilson Parish. Miss Olive Sturgess (vocalist), Miss Beatrice Harrison (violin-cello), and Mr. York Bowen (pianoforte) gave the audience exceptional pleasure.

Chatham Musical Society held its first concert of the season on December 15, when the Society's principal item was Somervell's cantata for baritone solo and chorus 'The Forsaken Merman.' Mr. Percy Feariley conducted, and sang the solos in the cantata.

Rochester, Chatham, and Gillingham Choral Society gave its annual performance of 'Messiah' on December 15,

at Rochester, Mr. C. Hylton Stewart conducting a full choir and orchestra of over two hundred. The soloists were Miss Doris Tomkins, Miss May Mattingley, Mr. Philip Wilson, and Mr. Walter Clapperton.

November proved a fairly busy month musically in the Medway towns. The orchestras of the Royal Engineers (under Lieut. Neville Flux), and the Royal Marines (under Lieut. Charles Hobly), have resumed their weekly symphony concerts at which mainly familiar works have been heard. Rochester Conservative Orchestra has also been revived, and is figuring largely in the winter series of Bohemian concerts. Rochester Symphony Orchestra collaborated with Maidstone Orchestral Society in a concert on November 17, in aid of the West Kent General Hospital. A very fine performance was given of Beethoven's fifth Symphony and the 'Hebrides' Overture, and the programme also included items by Grieg, Massenet, Elgar, Granville Bantock, and Sibelius. The first concert of the season by Rochester Choral Society attracted a large audience on November 10. The choir gave the brilliant reading demanded in Bach's great Motet, 'Sing ye to the Lord,' under the conductorship of Mr. C. Hylton Stewart, who followed the plan adopted by Sir Hugh Allen and the London and Oxford Bach Choirs of performing the Motet twice in the same programme. Another very great attraction was Mr. H. Plunket Greene's singing of Stanford's 'Songs of the Sea' (with full chorus), and a number of songs—mostly folk-songs, and all but two of British origin. Miss Joan Willis played some violoncello solos very effectively. On November 17 students of the Medway School of Music (principal, Mr. Leslie Mackay) gave a concert at Chatham, when a high standard of efficiency was reached by vocalists, pianist, violinist, and elocutionist. Mr. Leslie Mackay's Choir (seventy voices) sang part-songs by Coleridge-Taylor, Montague Phillips, Percy A. Whitehead, and Grieg. Sir Frederick Bridge, who was organist of Strood Parish Church in 1862-65, gave a recital on November 18 at the re-dedication of his former organ after its rebuilding. This organ was originally built for the Great Exhibition of 1851. Several stops have been enlarged and new ones added. A recital of chamber music was given at the Royal Naval Barracks, Chatham, on November 24, when the instrumentalists were Miss Elsie Dudding and Mr. John K. Snowden, of Queen's Hall Orchestra (violinist and cellist), Mr. J. S. Roberts (violin), Mr. B. P. Dudding (viola), and Mr. W. Petchey (organ). Mr. Mark Hambourg gave a pianoforte recital at Chatham on November 25, when Miss Helen Henschel sang. This recital was the third of the series known as the Chatham Subscription Concerts, and the Town Hall was not sufficiently large to accommodate all the 'Hambourg-ites.'

LIVERPOOL

A notable programme of French music was given at the third Philharmonic concert on November 16, conducted by the eminent French musician, M. Gabriel Pierné, with M. Cortot as solo pianist. The Overture 'Le Roi d'Ys' (Lalo), the Suite 'Deux paysages francésiens' (Pierné), the brilliant fifth Pianoforte Concerto of Saint-Saëns, and Fantaisie for pianoforte and orchestra (Debussy) were presented with all possible finish and ensemble. M. Pierné's Suite, heard for the first time in England, is based upon personal reminiscences of his sojourn in Italy. The first movement is suggestive of a convent garden at evening.

As a composer of the modern serious French school who has come under the influence of Debussy, M. Pierné has expressed himself with poetic imagination and delicate suggestiveness. The form is vague, and the chief aim that of atmosphere. Far more sturdy, and in places even strident, is his picture of the village religious procession with its noisy brass instruments, and endless and monotonous unison-hymn. Heard in connection with its programme, the music at a first hearing made a favourable impression. The Debussy Fantasia is music of his earlier period. It is a clever if not a great work, and is interesting in studying the later Debussy of 'L'Après-midi.' As in the Saint-Saëns Concerto, it provided the great French pianist with ample opportunity to display his masterful facility. One English item which crept into the programme very

worthily sustained the reputation of our younger native school. This was Balfour Gardiner's choral tone-poem 'April,' for chorus and orchestra, which provided a delightful ten minutes in a performance ably conducted by the chorister, Dr. A. W. Pollitt. The subject is a poem by Edward Carpenter, and is an ecstatic apostrophe to the spirit of Spring, and to 'April, month of Nymphs, Fauns, and Cupids.' It would be difficult indeed to conceive music more in keeping with the poetic fancy and imagery of the lines. The chorus-part makes instrumental demands on the singers, which were courageously surmounted, counsels of perfection apart, and it is hoped that a further hearing may be accorded to this extremely clever and effective work.

The performance of Beethoven's C minor Symphony at the Philharmonic concert on November 30 gave immense satisfaction to a number of subscribers of the older school who consider they have heard sufficient of the music of the ultra-modern type to last them for a long time. The performance, which was conducted by M. Bronislaw Szulc, of Warsaw, was very satisfactory.

Elgar's 'Polonia' also lost nothing of its interest and power in the appreciative hands of M. Szulc, but he failed to produce anything specially new in the symphonic poem, 'La Steppé,' by the late Siegmund Noskovski, another Warsaw musician of mark (the teacher of Rozycski, whose symphonic poem 'Anhelli' had to be omitted owing to lack of time). The vocalist was Mr. Frank Mullings, for whom an apology was made on the ground of hoarseness. All the same he was acceptably heard in songs by Wagner, and especially in Hugo Wolf's 'Secrecy.' His version of Schubert's 'Erl King' did not equally please. M. Bronislaw Szulc, a pupil of Noskovski and Nikisch, comes of good musical stock. His father was for forty years at the Warsaw Conservatorium, where he was Paderewski's professor. All his sons are musicians, and a notable family record is the performance given of Beethoven's Septet by Szulc *père* and six of his seven sons.

It was evident that great pains had been taken with the preparation of Berlioz's 'Faust,' of which the performance given by the Welsh Choral Union on November 20 reflected credit on its able conductor, Mr. Hopkin Evans, and upon his superb choral material. Ten years have elapsed since the Union's previous performance of this great work, and if indeed this was not surpassed on the present occasion it is assuring to find that the old spirit, intelligence, and enthusiasm remain with the old ideals. The Berlioz music may not give such soul-stirring choral opportunities as best suit these chorists, but in several numbers they were heard to advantage, as for example in the male-voice Fugue, and in the Apotheosis, where the soprano and altos sang effectively. Generally the chorus-singing was steady and good, and repaid the pains taken in two rehearsals each week. The band, led by Mr. Akeroyd, played well, but exception must be taken to the excessive speed of the Hungarian March, which resulted in a scramble. Excellent principals were found in Miss Caroline Hatchard, Mr. Webster Millar, Mr. J. C. Brien, and notably in Mr. Lewys James.

M. Serge Diaghilev's Russian Ballet recently fulfilled fortnight's engagement at the Olympia Theatre, where they gave performances of 'Les Sylphides' (Chopin), 'Scheherazade' (Rimsky-Korsakov), 'Prince Igor' (Borodin), 'Cleopatra' (Arensky), 'Thamar' (Balakirev), with 'Papillons' and 'Carnival' (Schumann), and 'La Boutique Fantasque' (Rossini). Nothing finer has been witnessed here in the technical skill and exquisite grace of the dancing, but the orchestral part was less perfect, owing to difficulties in the way. Certainly no effort was spared by the conductor, Mr. Edward Clark.

M. Heifetz made an extraordinary impression at his first appearance here on December 1. One can recall few similar scenes of enthusiasm in the Philharmonic Hall. The audience at once recognized that it was listening to a prodigy wielding astonishing executive powers. His caressing singing tone is inexpressibly beautiful, and makes a very sure human appeal. It was in music chiefly lyrical or decorative in quality, that Heifetz exerted his magnetism most irresistibly. He had an exceptionally good pianist in Mr. Samuel Chotzinoff.

At the third Rodewald chamber concert, on November 22, the Catterall Quartet, assisted by Miss Lucy Pierce as

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pianist, gave luminous performances of the Elgar Quintet and the Franck Quintet, an interesting association of representative works in which by comparison the Frenchman seemed happiest in this especial medium.

Other happenings include the recital given at Rushworth Hall, on November 18, by Mr. Frederick Blundell, a technically-skilful, if unemotional, pianist, who was heard in the Bach-Busoni Chaconne, Chopin's Sonata in B minor, and a Liszt group. The singer was Miss Ethel Penhall, a local contralto, who has a voice of beautiful and even quality.

At the pianoforte recital at St. George's Hall, on November 27, Miss Gladys Scollick displayed her steady progress to the ranks of pianists who count as artists as well as executants.

The Wednesday afternoon concerts at Crane Hall included a recital by Mr. Anderton Tyree and Miss Nanette Evans (violin), who played the Violin and Pianoforte Sonata in E flat by Richard Strauss. Miss Edina Thraves sang artistically. A clever violinist, Miss Katherine Kendall, with Miss Bertha Vanner as pianist, found favour on November 24, when also Miss Eva Sparkes (contralto) sang. On December 1, an accomplished local pianist, Miss Marguerite Stilwell, gave a recital assisted by Miss Isabel McCullagh (violin) and Miss Margaret Verity (vocalist). Miss Rose L. Matthews was the pianoforte soloist on December 8, with Miss Raymonde Amy and Mr. Albert Kirkman as singers, and Miss Kathleen Daly as violinist.

A line of appreciation is due to the enjoyable recital given at Rushworth Hall on December 7 by Miss Dorothy Ledsome (vocalist) and Mr. Walter Bridson, a fine pianist whose interpretative gift and executive skill were shown in a wide range of pieces.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT

The Beecham opera season was modified in mid-December, and by the omission of the more popular Christmas and New Year period, has been reduced from nine weeks to one of five weeks, commencing about the end of January. At the date of writing, 'Messiah' performances carry our season right up to Christmas Eve, and from Boxing Day over the New Year holiday Mr. Brand Lane has organized a series of twice-daily concerts by the Coldstream Guards band, with Signor De Tura, the Italian tenor vocalist. During the month under review chamber music has been particularly active, a gratifying feature being that all the participants are for the most part resident and trained at Manchester. The most notable visitor has been M. Cortot, who gave recitals at the Bowdon Chamber Society (November 18) and in the Free Trade Hall (December 9), and played with the Hallé Orchestra (November 18) in the new Rachmaninov Concerto. Ill-health prevented the writer's attendance at any music between November 18 and December 7, so that comment can only be based on impressions drawn from friends of competent judgment who were present.

Not many concerts have aroused such enthusiasm as the Hallé of November 18, when the great attractions were Arnold Bax's 'November Woods,' M. Cortot's playing, and 'Till Eulenspiegel.' Apart from his early choral miniature, 'Fatherland,' nothing by Bax has been heard here. But more is in store, and possibly a repeat performance of 'November Woods' would meet with gracious approval if the reception accorded the composer is my guide of the public appreciation. It is all to the good when a composer tells you that his work is not to be regarded as objective programme music, but as an impression of the dank and stormy ruin of nature in late autumn, and with these externals there would appear to be linked personal feelings—some affinity with the mood of the Buckinghamshire wood where he conceived the idea of this tone-poem. The wood-wind playing, as continuously so this season, was exquisite in its imaginative suggestiveness.

Some of us cannot forget Miss Bailey (Sir George Henschel's wife) or Mrs. Mary Davies, together with Mr. Edward Lloyd and Henschel himself as the ideal cast for 'Faust.' In Berlioz's 'Faust,' do we not need the subordination of the intellectual aspect of the name-part in favour of sheer vocal beauty? One cannot resist the feeling that before long Mr. Hamilton Harty will emerge as the

ablest of our orchestral-choral conductors after Sir Henry Wood, who must clearly be recognized as the one man in England who is complete master of both these departments, bestowing equal pains on the preparation and securing the most thorough co-ordination as a consequence. Sir Thomas Beecham could do it, but it never impressed one as being a fixed article of his artistic creed. Nobody who heard it will ever forget Sir Thomas' handling of 'Omar Khayyam' at two days' notice. It was a tremendous task, and only sheer genius carried it through. Neither Sir Henry Wood nor Mr. Hamilton Harty would have risked it; their method is more deliberate. Patient plodding brings its reward, and not a few discerned in Berlioz's 'Faust' that Mr. Harty's cultural methods are showing signs of budding—in due season the leafage, blossom, and fruitage. Miss Olga Haley, Mr. John Coates, Mr. Herbert Heyner, and Mr. Pashley were the soloists.

At the December 4 Hallé concert the chief novelty was Hamilton Harty's suite, 'Fantasy Scenes from an Eastern Romance,' that presented the Sultan, and his laughing juggler whose amorous attentions to Zuleika, the dancing girl, lead to her being sold into slavery, with the laughing juggler as top bidder. Its clever orchestration and melodic charm made an instant appeal. Don Manuel Quiroga, the Spanish Court violinist, played Mozart and a group of miscellaneous items.

The second Co-operative Wholesale Society's concert, on December 8, was this choir's first appearance since its success at Blackpool Festival. Its audience is a distinctive feature of Manchester's musical life. We may lament the lapse of a semi-private old Society, with its roots deep in musical history; here is something of our own time, built on broad foundations of the people's love for music. Nothing but sheer inaptitude in management could bring such an edifice to the dust. Mr. Norman Allin joined the choir in a whole-hearted, rollicking interpretation of Stanford's 'Sea-Songs.' Many Societies can do them well with pianoforte accompaniment, but who has yet heard one with orchestral accompaniment which has had spontaneity and cohesion? The next Welsh Eisteddfod might prescribe this cycle for its male-voice choral contest, providing conductors with a professional orchestra, as was done with Stanford's 'Revenge' last summer.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society's Choir bids fair soon to become our most prominent male-voice choir, and as such it ought to consign to the dust-heaps some of the things sung on this occasion. Miss Desmond and Mr. Albert Sammons deserve mention not alone for the beauty and distinction of their executive ability, but for the higher standard of taste shown in their selections.

Pride of place must be awarded to the Edith Robinson Quartet for its work in the past month in the Beethoven celebration performances of all the Quartets in chronological order. Dr. Brodsky and Mr. R. J. Forbes are to follow in January with the Pianoforte Sonatas, and the official Hallé commemoration concert will be given on the day these notes go to press.

Two young trios—Miss Midgeley and Messrs. Hatton and Sidebottom, and the Misses D. Crewe, Jo Lamb, and K. Moorhouse—show both determination and ambition to make for themselves a place in the city's chamber-music life. Nearly all the trios and quartets which have sprung up here in the last ten or fifteen years owe their early training in ensemble and musical inspiration to Dr. Brodsky, who, twenty-five years ago, founded the quartet bearing his name. On November 30 his anniversary was recognized at the Royal Manchester College of Music in separate presentations from (a) the College, (b) the staff, (c) the students. In replying, Dr. Brodsky commented on the inadequacy of present equipment to meet the great and sudden influx of students. It cannot be met immediately, but the finest reward for his ungrudging work of the last twenty years would be to provide for this necessity.

The transfer of the Brodsky concerts to Monday mid-day at Houldsworth Hall has been attended by too much bad luck in the way of fog and other hindrances to free movement to enable any fair estimate of the situation to be made. The first of the series included the Elgar Quartet, and the second was by way of amplifying the Beethoven celebrations, in which the Robinson Quartet had taken the initiative.

A very happy method of celebrating Dr. Brodsky's completion of twenty-five years' residence and work here was taken by the Tuesday Mid-day Committee in asking him on December 4 to play the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, which is dedicated to him, and which he was the means of introducing to Manchester. Mr. John Wills played the pianoforte transcription of the accompaniment.

NEWCASTLE ON TYNE

Messrs. Elkin & Curwen, having included Newcastle in the list of centres at which recitals of modern British music are being given, fulfilled the engagement on November 10, when Miss Ursula Greville was the vocalist and Mr. Percival Garratt the pianist.

On November 20 the Bach Choir gave a programme mainly devoted to the unaccompanied choral works of Balfour Gardiner, the composer himself being present. Besides the 'Stage Coach,' 'The Hunt is up,' 'The Three Ravens,' and several smaller examples, a new work, 'An old song resung,' was given its first performance. Quite a remarkable impress was made with Bantock's setting of the Hebridean folk-tune, 'The Death Crown,' for contralto solo with humming choral accompaniment. Several effects, such as that of the passage for female voices in six parts above the solo, suggest that there is a field for interesting developments in such combinations. Another interesting item was a five-part work entitled 'Aye she kin'd her yellow hair,' by Mr. E. Crowe, a member of the Choir. The work had secured the award in the choral class of the Composition section of the North of England Musical Tournament last midsummer. It is a charming piece of writing, in folk-song style, making very effective use of humming accompaniments. The choral singing throughout the concert was very elastic, the contrasting moods of the various items being responded to with wonderful ease.

On November 24, the Rhoda Backhouse Trio gave a recital, the programme consisting of Brahms' Trio in C minor, Op. 101, Ireland's Fantasy Trio No. 2, and Dvorák's 'Dumky' Trio.

The Newcastle and Gateshead Choral Union gave a brilliant performance of Elgar's 'Spirit of England' and Holst's 'Cloud Messenger.' The Newcastle Philharmonic Orchestra accompanied, and did its work efficiently, though the horn passages in the Holst did not always quite come off.

On November 13, Prof. Donald F. Tovey lectured before the Newcastle branch of the British Music Society on 'Progress and Permanence in Music.' The lecturer combated the fallacious view that one composer could be said to supersede another in the same way as a scientific theory had to give way before the results of later research. A Mozart symphony was quite complete in itself, and a Beethoven work in the same form was not an 'improved' Mozart.

Mr. A. M. Henderson, of Glasgow University, gave a delightful lecture-recital on 'Russian Composers for the Pianoforte,' to the members of the same Society on December 9.

NOTTINGHAM AND DISTRICT

A noticeable feature of the season's music has been the sparse attendance at many of the concerts so far held at Nottingham. The almost unexampled stagnation in local industries makes this no matter for surprise; but nevertheless it is regrettable. The second 'international celebrity' concert took place on November 16, with Miss Adela Verne as pianist and Miss Stella Power as vocalist, violin and violoncello solos being supplied by M. Melsa and M. Jean Gerandy respectively. On November 17, Messrs. Wilson Peck's concert consisted principally of scenes from 'Die Meistersinger,' when Miss Caroline Hatchard, Miss Elith Clegg, Mr. Maurice D'Oisly, and Mr. Frederick Ranalow, admirably sustained the various rôles. Miss Winifred Small's violin solos were effective, and Miss Ethel Cook was an admirable accompanist. Wagnerian opera also filled the Sacred Harmonic Society's programme on the following night, with an efficient performance of 'The Flying Dutchman.' Strong local interest was provided by three of the soloists—Miss Florence Mellors, Madame Ethel Edgar, and Mr. Charles Keywood—being natives of

Nottingham. Mr. Charles Knowles' baritone proved in power to cope with the very strenuous orchestral accompaniment, Mr. Alfred Heather interpreted the tenor part, and under Mr. Allen Gill's direction the choir sang with distinction.

An enthusiastic audience gathered at the People's Concert on November 24, to welcome the Hailé Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood's conductorship. The fifth Symphony, 'Die Meistersinger' Overture, Massenet's 'Le Cid,' Jarnefeldt's 'Praeludium,' and Elgar's 'Dorabella' preceded Tchaikovsky's 'Francesca da Rimini.' In the concluding item, Boëllmann's 'Fantai-je Dialoguée' for organ and orchestra, Mr. Johnson officiated on the solo instrument with marked effect.

The Nottingham Gleemen gave their annual concert on November 27, and reflected credit on Mr. C. Riley's training, singing with good balance, tone, and enunciation. Two outstanding numbers were German's 'O Peaceful Night,' and Shepherd's 'In Memory.' Miss Lucy Goodwin, Mr. Sam Hemsall, and Mr. James Coleman contributed solos, and Mr. C. E. Pindar accompanied skilfully.

It was encouraging to find the second chamber music concert at University College on December 2 even better attended than the first. The executive included Miss Cantelo again at the pianoforte, and the London Philharmonic String Quartet. Beethoven's Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 was succeeded by Joseph Speight's three 'Shakespearian Pieces' for string quartet: (a) 'The Lonely Shepherd,' (b) 'Queen Mab sleeps,' (c) 'Puck.' Finally came Brahms' gorgeous Quartet, Op. 25, in G minor (for pianoforte, violin, viola, and violoncello), given by all performers with entrancing brilliance and imagination. The only regret that was felt was in having no opportunity for hearing Miss Cantelo as soloist on this occasion.

The annual concert in aid of the Railwaymen's Benevolent Institution was held on December 2, with Madame Elsa Stralia, Miss Gertrude Higgs, Miss Winifred Small, Mr. Arthur Gordon, and Mr. Norman Allin as artists, and Mr. David Richards as accompanist. Mr. William Turner's yearly concert is always a popular event, and on December 4 proved so once more. Miss Caroline Hatchard deputised for Miss Flora Woodman—who was indisposed—with great success, and Mr. Foster Richardson's bass songs were also appreciated. The Misses G. and M. Allington won favour in vocal duets, Miss F. Webb in her contralto solos, and Miss Sybil Keymer by her violin playing. The Nottingham Philharmonic Society delighted the audience with finely delivered part-songs, and the Girls' Prize Choir sustained its reputation yet again. Mr. G. W. A. Hollings and Miss Ida Sansome acted as highly efficient accompanists.

NEIGHBOURING TOWNS

The Long Eaton Orchestral Society's first concert was given on November 25, under Mr. F. Mountney's direction. The programme included Wagner's 'Rienzi' Overture, Mendelssohn's 'Italian' Symphony, Sibelius' 'Finlandia,' Elgar's 'Dorabella,' and Grieg's 'Peer Gynt.' Miss Margaret Fairless as violinist, and Mr. Robert Radford as soloist, won great applause, and Miss E. Roseblade's accompaniments added to the artistic effect of the evening. The Long Eaton Choral Society's season opened on December 9 with 'The Golden Legend.' Mr. E. Smeeton conducting. The principals were Miss Agnes Christa, Miss Grace Ivell, Mr. L. Lovesay, and Mr. David Brazell. The chorus work was particularly good.

The Lincoln Musical Society's twenty-fourth season was brilliantly inaugurated on December 1. Under the baton of Dr. G. J. Bennett (hon. conductor) the band and choir sustained an interestingly varied programme, with the aid of Miss Winifred Lawson, Mr. William Hesselstone, and Mr. George Baker, the accompanist being Mr. H. S. Trevitt.

On November 11, the second Leicester Chamber Music Society's concert boasted a special interest, in the performance of Dr. Ethel Smyth's String Quartet in E minor, rehearsed under the composer's personal supervision. The executive comprised the Ladies' String Quartet, and Mr. John Booth (tenor).

OXFORD

Oxford has marvellously recovered since the war. We have had between two and three thousand undergraduates here this term, and feel very much exhilarated thereby; while there has been such a superabundance of music that we must rest content with only a short chronicle of the chief events.

Pachmann came to see us, and again to say 'good-bye,' on October 15; he played as delightfully as ever. The first of a series of eight Subscription Concerts took place on October 22 at the Town Hall, when Sir Hugh Allen conducted some forty or fifty members of the London Symphony Orchestra, giving a most enjoyable concert. The programme included Beethoven's *Pianoforte Concerto in G*, Miss Myra Hess playing the solo part, beautifully.

On October 25 Hamburg gave an excellent recital at the Town Hall, and as well as showing how absolutely at home he is with Beethoven, gave also Ravel's *'Jeux d'eau'* and Debussy's *'Toccata.'*

On November 4 came the second Subscription Concert in the same building, when the Bohemian Czech Quartet gave a fine programme consisting mainly of advanced works, the most notable perhaps being Smetana's Quartet, *'Aus meinem Leben.'* It was a mistake for these gentlemen to have so much altered the arrangement of the printed programme without notice after the eleventh hour, thus causing disappointment to the more musical part of the audience who had gone to some trouble to procure the scores.

On November 5 we had a visit from Melba, and on the afternoon of November 12, at the Masonic Hall, a charming concert of Italian music, ancient and modern, the performers being Miss Olga Rudge (violin), Miss Renata Borgatti (pianoforte), and Mr. Audrey Merry (singer). The same evening, in the Town Hall, M. Cortot gave an excellent recital, and pleased everybody, though perhaps Chopin was a little too much drawn upon.

In the afternoon of November 28 the Bach Choir and Choral Society, under Sir Hugh Allen, gave the Christmas Oratorio in the Sheldonian Theatre. Unfortunately the weather was dark and cloudy, and the theatre not being lighted—or lightable—several numbers had to be omitted, but these being judiciously selected did not appear to mar in any great degree the excellent effect of the whole, which was really a notable performance. The soloists were Miss A. Williams, Miss D. Clarke, Mr. Tudor Davies, and Mr. Topliss Green.

The third Subscription Concert, on December 2, was given by the Oxford Orchestral Society aided by London wind-players, and conducted by Mr. Maurice Besley, organist of Queen's College. The concert was excellent, and included the *'Meistersinger'* Overture (perhaps taken a little too slowly). Brahms' Symphony in D, Op. 73, was thoroughly well played, and showed great care in its preparation. The soloist, Norah Dawney sang among other things between the instrumental items 'Sabbath Morning' from Elgar's *'Sea Pictures'* and Purcell's beautiful *'Evening Hymn'*, the accompaniment being arranged for strings by Mr. Besley.

On December 3 Mr. Arthur Rubinstein gave at the Town Hall one of the best pianoforte recitals we have ever had the pleasure of listening to, and there is no doubt that an enthusiastic welcome awaits him whenever again he comes this way.

SOUTH WALES

In the Merthyr district considerable musical activity was shown last month, and many miscellaneous concerts with local talent have been held. At Tredegar, the Orpheus Vale-Voice Choir had a great reception at Olympia on November 28, and among others, concerts were held at Bedlinog (December 6), Trelewis (December 8), and Cwmtaff Fawr (December 9). At Merthyr Mr. Val Stevens organized an orchestral concert for December 12, with Madame Elsa Stalnia as principal artist. Special mention may be made of the fine orchestral concert given by the Nelson and District Orchestral Society, conducted by Mr. D. Roger Jones, at Nelson, on December 9. It is very creditable that such a body of players can be raised in a small village, and it is perhaps to these mining villages, full of life and enthusiasm, and with no counter-attractions, that the material may be

looked for to maintain a permanent Welsh National Orchestra.

The Cardiff Chamber Music Society held its third concert of the season at the hall of the High School for Girls, on the evening of December 1. Miss Jelly d'Aranyi (violin) and Mrs. Ethel Hobday (pianoforte) were the joint exponents of the Sonatas of César Franck, Dohnányi (Op. 21), and Beethoven (Op. 30, No. 2).

On December 2, the Albert Hall, Swansea, was crowded, the occasion being the appearance of M. Alfred Cortot and Miss Vera Horton at the last of the Swansea Subscription Concerts. M. Cortot's playing of Chopin's twenty-four Preludes was, as always, a memorable experience.

Tours of 'celebrity' and ballad concert parties have brought many well-known artists into South Wales recently, including the Welsh mezzo who has lately sprung into (apparently well-deserved) fame—Miss Leila Megane.

The Newport Choral Society, under the conductorship of Mr. Arthur Sims, held its first concert of the season on December 9, when the first performance at Newport was given of Coleridge-Taylor's *'Bon-Bon'* Suite—six short poems of Thomas Moore, set to music for baritone solo, chorus, and orchestra. Miscellaneous selections completed the programme. The artists were Miss Stiles-Allen and Mr. Harry Dearth, the New London Wind Quintet (from the London Symphony Orchestra), and a choir of some two hundred and thirty voices.

YORKSHIRE

LEEDS

Though Leeds has been disappointed of the visit of the Beecham Opera Company, which is officially stated to be 're-organizing,' it has none the less had some rather exceptionally interesting musical experiences. To begin with, the Parish Church, under the present Vicar, and its recently appointed organist, Dr. Tysoe, is doing something to present good music outside the ordinary run of services—which on the cathedral lines planned long ago by Dr. Hook, have made it famous among parish churches. Recently we have had an evening devoted to Bach, and another to Brahms. At the former, on December 21, Dr. Tysoe played some typical organ pieces, including the Toccata in F, and two fine Chorale Preludes, and the ordinary choir of the Church sang the cantata *'Wachet Auf.'* The Brahms evening, on December 7, was devoted to the 'German Requiem,' which received an impressive interpretation. The instrumental side of the work was represented very effectively by a small body of capable string players, with drums and pianoforte (to replace the harps), and the organ to fill in the wind parts. Dr. Tysoe conducted, and Mr. Aubie Bennett, who was at the organ, used his instrument very discreetly. The solos were artistically sung by Miss Mary Swales and Mr. Harry Burley, the latter a new-comer in the choir, who promises to become a useful member.

Each of the two principal Leeds choral societies has, at the time of writing, given a concert, and by the date of publication will have followed these up with the usual Christmas *'Messiah'* performances. The Choral Union gave the first part of Bantock's *'Omar Khayyam'* on November 7 under the direction of Dr. Coward, who secured an excellent performance of the choral passages. Miss Phyllis Lett and Mr. John Coates were well fitted for their respective parts, and Mr. Arthur Cranmer as the *Philosopher* proved a very efficient substitute, as he had done at Huddersfield only the week before. The Philharmonic, for its concert on November 20, fell back on *'Elijah,'* and the chorus singing, under Dr. Bairstow's inspiring conducting, attained a high level of precision and fire; rarely, indeed, has one heard so much genuine vitality put into the choruses, and that not for the sake of effect, but from the necessity for adequate expression. Miss Stiles Allen, Miss Margaret Balfour, Mr. Hepworth, and Captain Horace Stevens (a most forceful and earnest *Elijah*) were the principals. Two of the Saturday Orchestral Concerts fall to be recorded. On November 27 Mr. Hamilton Harty conducted a fine performance of Rachmaninov's E minor Symphony, and Miss Agnes Nicholls gave a dramatic and impulsive reading of Isolda's scene, in which she tells Brangéine of her early meeting with Tristan. At the next concert, on December 11, a symphony by

Mr. Harding Churton, the enthusiastic amateur who is responsible for the organization of the concerts, was introduced to the programme. It is a pleasing, unaffected composition, and if not particularly original, more than creditable to one who has not made music the chief occupation of his life. It is entitled 'Old England,' but save for a couple of themes in the *Scherzo*, the chief discernible influences come from abroad. Schumann's *Pianoforte Concerto*, with Miss Kanevskaya as soloist, was also in the programme.

One of the pleasantest experiences at Leeds during the past month was on December 4, when the local branch of the English Folk-Dance Society gave a programme of folk-dances and folk-songs in the Town Hall. The Country dances, Morris dances, Sword dances, and jigs were admirably executed by some forty or fifty dancers, whose graceful rhythmical movements produced a charming effect. As an appropriate alternative Miss Patufla Kennedy Fraser gave some of her Hebridean songs, accompanying herself on a small Celtic harp.

At the Leeds Bohemian Concert on December 1, String Quartets by Frank Bridge (E minor) and Haydn (in D, Op. 64), with Goossens' fanciful little sketches, 'By the Tarn' and 'Jack o' Lantern,' formed the programme, and were well executed by Mr. Bensley Ghent and his colleagues.

Mid-day recitals have been given at the University by Miss Helen Guest, who, on November 30, played Brahms' Sonata in F minor in masterly style, and Miss Muriel Robinson, who, on December 10, gave a very well-chosen selection of Christmas songs. At another series of mid-day recitals, that given on December 8 by Mr. Charles Neville deserves mention, for his programme was of songs by the great German composers, all to translations by Mr. S. Langford, of Manchester, who accompanied, and whose passing commentary added greatly to their interest.

SHEFFIELD

Two of the Sheffield subscription concerts have been held—both, of course, in the Victoria Hall—during the period here reviewed. The first, on November 16, took a form which is evidently thought specially to appeal to Sheffield concert audiences—that of an 'operatic' concert. Miss Caroline Hatchard, Miss Edith Clegg, Mr. Maurice D'Oisly, Mr. Frederick Ranalow, and Mr. George Lawton, with Miss Winifred Small as solo violinist and Miss Ethel Cook as accompanist, formed the concert party, and the whole of the second part of the programme was occupied with an extended selection from Wagner's 'The Mastersingers.' Mr. Ranalow did something to lessen the disadvantage of the absence of stage setting and action by explaining the dramatic situations from time to time, and Miss Cook did a great deal towards suggesting the contents of the orchestral score; but such a concert can be favourably regarded only as a 'musical appreciation' lesson, though the actual performance of Wagner's work, to which it would have been a useful preliminary, is at present apparently out of the bounds of possibility—more's the pity. But why not bring a similar set of artists in conjunction with the Promenade Orchestra, and let us have a concert performance? That would, at any rate, be a step in the right direction, and, I feel sure, a very popular one.

The other concert of the same series, on December 7, was provided by the Hallé Orchestra—with, of course, Mr. Hamilton Harty as conductor—and Miss Isolde Menges as solo violinist in Glazounov's Concerto. The 'Symphonie Fantastique' of Berlioz was the principal work, and the famous Hallé Orchestra, under the stimulating direction of its new conductor, gave a really fine performance. Mr. Harty evidently loves his Berlioz, and his interpretations of that composer's works—conceived as they are in a spirit of fidelity to Berlioz's intentions, and realised by the aid of so competent a body of artists as the Hallé Orchestra—will supply 'a long-felt want,' and no doubt tend to hasten the coming of the time when Berlioz will be appreciated at full value. Handel's 'Water Music' and Grainger's 'Molly on the Shore' completed the programme, and were received with much enthusiasm. The whole programme was got through in under two hours—to its better effect and the general satisfaction of the audience.

At the Quinlan concert on November 18, M. Rosing, Mr. George Curzon, Mlle. Renée Chemet, Mr. Arthur Rubinstein, and Mr. Ivor Newton (accompanist) were the artists. M. Rosing had not before been heard at Sheffield, and his unconventional style and methods aroused a good deal of interest. His tendency to exaggeration of the dramatic side of his art seems to spoil some of his work, and he was not apparently in his best form, but his singing was in many respects notable, and of his earnestness and ability he left no one in doubt. Mlle. Renée Chemet is already a very popular violinist at Sheffield, and there are many people who would like to hear her again in something of more musical value than the trifles which she threw off with such aplomb on this occasion. Mr. Arthur Rubinstein played Liszt's 'Funerailles' and Rhapsody No. 1, Chopin's *Scherzo* in C sharp minor, and other things brilliantly. His technique is wonderful, but one gets the impression that it is rather a barrier than a means of communication between him and his audience.

Mlle. Graziella Pareto quite won the hearts of her audience at the 'international celebrity' concert on December 8 by her singing of several operatic arias, and two youthful artists in M. Bratza, the Serbian violinist, and M. Claudio Arrau, pianist, made an excellent impression by their clever playing. Mr. Victor Marmont was a first-rate accompanist.

The Sheffield Teachers' Operatic Society has, in the general opinion, surpassed itself in its production of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Princess Ida,' which drew crowded audiences to the Lyceum Theatre during the week ending December 4. The work of the principals (with one or two exceptions), of the orchestra, and especially of the chorus, reached a really high standard, and there was hardly a hitch, even in the early performances. Mr. G. E. Lindon conducted, and Mr. A. Revill Slater was stage-manager and coach.

OTHER YORKSHIRE TOWNS

The Bradford Subscription Concert of November 10 consisted of a recital by two excellent artists, M. Alfonso Cortot, who played twelve of Chopin's Studies, and Miss Olga Hale, whose choice of songs was a catholic one, covering many types, among which a group by living British composers more than held its own. The next Subscription Concert, on December 10, was by the Hallé Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood. Señor Manuel Quiroga was the soloist in Lalo's 'Symphonie Espagnole,' in which his deftness of execution and refined style were well displayed, and Tchaikovsky's 'Francesca da Rimini' was a notable feature of the occasion, and was very finely played. Not the least enjoyable thing in the programme was Sir Henry's own Orchestral Suite (No. 6), concocted from Bach's chamber works—a very successful transcription, and most effective.

The Huddersfield Music Club's concert on December 13 was sustained by Miss Agnes Nicholls, who, with Mr. Paul Kilburn at the pianoforte, gave a song recital. On November 24 a Huddersfield tenor, Mr. Harold Hallas, gave a recital, a striking feature of which was the happy arrangement of groups of songs under different classes, with such headings as 'The Close of Day,' 'The Christ,' and 'To Joy of Love.' On November 20 Mr. Kaye's well-drilled orchestra gave a concert, and on November 23 Mr. Eaglefield Hull gave an organ recital in aid of the Westminster Abbey fund, with the assistance of Mr. Philip Wilson, an Australian artist, as vocalist.

The Halifax Choral Society, on November 25, gave Brahms' 'German Requiem,' which was chosen in memory of its late president, Mr. Holdsworth. Mr. C. H. Moodie conducted a good choral performance, and Miss Caroline Hatchard and Mr. Farrington were the soloists. At the concert of the Halifax Madrigal Society, on December 12, Mr. Shepley conducted some very finished performances of unaccompanied part-music. Señor Quiroga was the solo violinist, and Miss Mignon Nevada the vocalist.

'Hiawatha's Wedding-Feast' and 'The Sun Worshippers' (the latter a welcome revival of a work by Goring Thomas which does not merit oblivion) were the choral works given by the Middlesbrough Musical Union on December 12, when Dr. Kilburn—as able and hard-working a volunteer as the cause of music in the north of England has ever

known—secured thoroughly adequate performances. Miss Agnes Nicholls and Mr. Herbert Teale were the vocalists. At Ripon, in the Cathedral, Mozart's 'Requiem' was given under Mr. Moody's direction on December 1, when Miss Amanda Taylor, Miss Wrack, and Messrs. Deane and Wood were the solo vocalists. Mr. C. L. Naylor was at the organ, which was reinforced by strings and drums.

THE VIOLS IN ENGLAND

The new Session of the Musical Association opened on November 2 with an exhaustive paper on 'The Viols in England' by Mr. Jeffrey Pulver. He said it was doubtful if a subject more essentially English could have been chosen from the pages of musical history. Although of foreign origin, they became thoroughly naturalised in this country, and exercised great influence upon the history of English instrumental music. The viols were instruments of much importance, and in consideration of their virtue in the artistic, historical, and sociological aspects, merited detailed treatment. In all probability they were introduced into England from the Netherlands, and enjoyed a vogue here unequalled in any other country. Nowhere in Europe were the viols clung to so tenaciously, and nowhere were they given up in favour of the violins with greater reluctance. The English violists were renowned as technicians, and in the 17th century their virtuosity equalled, and even surpassed, that of the contemporary violinists. Used for a long time side by side with the lutes, the viols were admirably adapted for accompaniment; their soft and sympathetic tone blended well with the voice, and, as it were, supplemented it. Even alone, or in the quartet, they were of very great interest, and it would be to the great advantage of music generally if more of the 17th century instrumental works were resuscitated.

After remarking upon the interest shown by Henry VIII., Mr. Pulver said it was a pity that records were not available of the musical doings of the middle classes of that period. Constant quotation from the State Papers was apt to lead the student to imagine that outside the Royal Court no music was cultivated. This was by no means the case. Sir Thomas More entertained his family at dinner and supper to high moral purpose, and allowed them for their recreation to sing and play on the viols. The Parliamentary Act of 1543 stopped to some extent the making of public music ; it interfered with the fun that enlivened the Sundays of earlier years, and it caused the Royal band to be reduced in numbers, but probably popular music did not suffer much, and the viol remained in request.

With the accession of Queen Elizabeth the second stage in the development of the viol commenced, and it was not long before England was raised to a musical plane that was unequalled anywhere in Europe at the period. The Queen's own musicianship was of a high order, and she would certainly not have tolerated any slipshod performances on the part of her instrumentalists. The lecturer took occasion to refer to the use of the term 'violons' in several entries in the Lord Chamberlain's Records during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth, a circumstance which had given many otherwise trustworthy authorities the idea that the violin, as we know it, was already extensively used in the middle of the 16th century, but he believed that the term 'violin' was often used for the smaller viols (giving the Italian diminutive termination its proper sense), while the word 'viol' was employed for the larger, or bass, viol. It was fairly well established that no instrument of the modern violin family was made much before the middle of the 16th century, and though it was not impossible for early examples to have been introduced here very soon after their manufacture, it was asking too much to expect us to believe that they were popularised so rapidly that Henry should employ six of them before their varnish was properly dry. In fact, when the violins were actually brought into Court service, the circumstance was entered in the Lord Chamberlain's Records as something noteworthy. Thus on March 14, 1637-8, £12 was paid to Mr. Francis de la France for a 'Treble violin bought by him for his Majesty's service,' and on January 31 of the same year a similar amount was paid to John Woodington for a 'Cremona violin, to play to the organ.' Such sums were much too high for treble viols to

have been meant. These entries were over eighty years later than the first mention of 'violins' in the State Papers, and the lecturer said he was convinced that all earlier references applied to viols. It should not be forgotten also that even in early Stuart times the violins were the instruments of the gentry and musicians, while the violin was considered of lower caste. Anthony Wood tells us that before the Restoration the gentlemen who attended musical parties played on viols, 'for they esteemed a violin to be an instrument only belonging to a common fiddler, and would not endure that it should come among them, for fear of making their meetings to be vain and fiddling.'

The changing of the ruling house from Tudor to Stuart marked the beginning of the greatest period for the viol in England. They came more and more into favour, usurping the position hitherto held by the lute. Composers and publishers saw the trend, and encouraged it by writing and issuing a large quantity of suitable music. It was part of everyone's education to learn at least one of the instruments of this family, and to play on it at sight. During the Commonwealth their vogue suffered no diminution, in spite of all depreciatory references to the Puritans. After the Restoration the violins became more serious competitors of the viols, the formation of Charles II.'s band of violins on the lines of the exquisite two dozen of France giving the *coup de grâce* to the smaller viols, at any rate. Only the gamba persisted obstinately, and it was a good century later before it could be said that the bass-viol was antiquated. Although the band of violins was the glory of Charles II.'s establishment, violists were still being engaged. This appeared from a number of entries referring to the private music of the King, showing that although Charles may have been proud of his band of twenty-four fiddlers for State occasions, he still clung to the viols for his own entertainment. The bass-viol, the last of a noble race, died hard. Thomas Mace, in the last quarter of the 17th century, wrote bitterly and scathingly on 'scoulding violins,' and pointed out in forceful manner how the new instruments out-screamed the rest of the consort; but to no avail. A few good players still remained, but the days of the viols were numbered.

The Treble viol was the first to disappear. Like the rest of the family, it had six strings tuned :



an octave above the bass viol. The tenor viol was a 5th below the treble viol. Neither the treble nor the tenor viol was played under the chin as is now the case, but was rested on the left breast, a little below the shoulder. The higher positions were thus hardly used, nor did the system of fretting conduce to easy shifting.

Some illustrations were played on a fine tenor viol made by 'William Turner at ye hand and Crowne in gravelle Lane, Aldgate London, 1652', Mr. Pulver being accompanied by Sir Frederick Bridge, who also occupied the chair.

Musical Notes from Abroad

AMSTERDAM

The Beethoven Festival may be said to have been on the whole a great success. At the time of writing there is only one more concert due, which will be devoted to the master's ninth Symphony. The work done by the management of the Festival is deserving of nothing but the highest praise. Indeed the arrangement of the programmes of the fourteen chamber music concerts was almost exemplary, and it may be doubted whether a better survey of Beethoven's creations could have been attained. If the Pianoforte Sonatas were not found to be represented, this was because they cannot really come under the denomination of chamber music proper. Moreover of late years we have had various opportunities on which the whole of them have been heard, so that this fact alone would explain their being passed over on these occasions. So much is certain, that the chamber music works which were missing in the programmes are not of such importance as materially to influence our view of the great composer with regard to this particular branch. His Trios for strings, despite their intrinsic value, have never attained

real popularity, and his Pianoforte Quartets are negligible. Beethoven's refusal to have them published is strong evidence of his unrelenting self-criticism. The only two works one might have wished to hear along with the others were the String Quintet, Op. 29, and the famous Septuor. A drawback in these concerts, however, lay in the fact that there are hardly any permanent combinations of artists who make trio-playing their speciality. Once more we were forcibly reminded that the indiscriminate collaboration of three accomplished artists may produce anything but ideal results.

As was foreseen, the six concerts devoted to the String Quartets gave the highest artistic pleasure. The interest was enhanced by the fact that with one exception each of the six quartet parties played one work of each of the master's three periods. The 'Bohemians,' to whose share fell only two works, prompted by a quite gratifying *jalosité de métier*, made up their programme with the charming Trio Serenade in D major (Op. 8). If the performance of the Fugue, Op. 133 (played by the Hague Quartet) was not such as might have been desired, this formed the only item in the entire series which gave rise to adverse criticism. Although it was by no means difficult to prophesy that the 'Bohemians' would carry off the palm, yet the difference between them and such bodies as the Quatuor Poulet (Paris), the Rosé Quartet (Vienna), and the Budapest Quartet was only slightly perceptible. One of the chief points of interest was the treatment of dynamic nuances, and more especially the characteristic 'Beethoven crescendo.' By the way, contrary to popular opinion, this cannot properly be said to have been an innovation of Beethoven's, for it certainly was one of the *chevaux de bataille* of the famous Mannheim orchestra, and Mozart, after having heard that splendid band, has testified to this by immediately making use of it himself in his 'Nozze di Figaro' (No. 7, *Terzetto*). The Budapest Quartet went perhaps just a trifle too far in the underlining of this particular effect. Their performance seemed to be based on an exhibition of dynamic virtuosity. If in this respect they showed an almost unrivalled mastery, the sensational effect they secured by playing the final *Allegro* of Op. 95 *sul ponticello* must at any rate be regarded as a liberty. It is a matter for regret that the first five orchestral concerts failed to partake of a festive nature. Indeed, they would have been unpardonably dull if the situation had not been saved by the respective soloists, MM. Egon Petri and Leonid Kreutzer, and Madame Ilona Durigo. It was not until the reappearance of Mengelberg that one was able to rejoice again in the true Beethoven. Seldom will the 'Pastorale' have met with so unbound and tumultuous a success as on this occasion. As if by magic the orchestra seemed to have regained its splendid characteristics, while M. Zimmermann surpassed all his former performances of the solo part in the Violin Concerto. Mengelberg has once more given evidence that his matchless reputation is well founded.

W. HARMANS.

PARIS

The recent article by Marguerite d'Alvarez in the Paris *Daily Mail*, on English *à la* foreign names for English singers, has evidently fallen into the hands of English-speaking French people. 'Why not be British?' asks the artist; 'Why should this camouflage be necessary?' The French share her views in part. 'The English,' they say, 'must ever remain English. Even if brought up in France, they cannot hide their nationality. But in the name of common sense, why should they try to?' French managers, however, rather approve of the practice, than otherwise. They have no difficulty in reading and pronouncing Italian names, as well as those originating in various other countries. But the British variety is a little beyond them. Struggle as they may, certain names baffle their most concentrated efforts.

It may also be pointed out that, so far as singing is concerned, the mere mention of a performer with an English name is to court adverse criticism. French critics, both professional and amateur, who have sampled London concerts, do not entertain flattering recollections of what they have heard. Consequently they are not favourably

disposed towards artists with English names. That is why, as was pointed out in this column last month, it is high time they were undeceived.

REVIVALS

The revivals announced at the Opéra-Comique are as follows: 'La Habsafara,' with its atmospheric colouring and many dull moments, 'Barbe Bleu,' 'Pelléas et Mélisande,' the very gruesome 'La Lepreuse,' and 'Le Pays,' a little-known work by Ropartz. 'Les Armailles' and Berlioz's 'Béatrice et Bénédict' also are promised, as well as Offenbach's 'Les Bavarde.' Why an *opéra-bouffe* is permitted to figure at a theatre dedicated to *opéra-comique* is not clear.

Talking of the above establishment, 'Madame Butterfly' is nearing its two hundred and fiftieth performance thereof. The composer's 'Tosca' and 'Bohème' run it close for popularity, all three works being given throughout France. The rôle of Pinkerton, however, is seldom in capable hands. The music is essentially Italian, and French tenor voices rarely have the right Italian quality. Apropos of operatic affairs, at the Paris Opéra parts occasionally are oddly distributed. To allot Iago to a bass and the baritone rôle in 'Thaïs' to the same voice hardly seems expedient. The latest departure is to allow a bass to try conclusions with Tonio in 'Pagliacci.'

AN INDIAN OTELLO

Musical circles throughout France are interested in Ali Khan, the Indian tenor, whom Madame Emma Nevada recently introduced at an *audition* at Paris. Upon this occasion Ali Khan was heard in the death scene from 'Otello,' which he interpreted with admirable roundness of tone and with commendable understanding of the situation. He also sang that *pièce de résistance*, 'Celeste Aida,' as well as the ever charming (and always fresh) 'Pur dicesti' and an excerpt from 'Barbiere,' in which his flexibility of voice recalled Bonci. Meanwhile it is hoped that the new-comer will appear as Otello, a part for which he apparently is suited—both vocally and temperamentally.

Ali Khan sings in Italian, and to the manner born. He also sings like an Italian, which is more remarkable when it is remembered that the natives of India invariably sing without expression. The native voice, too, like the Persian voice, is very high-pitched. Ali Khan's, on the other hand, is of Italian quality, with good lower notes, and of a timbre seldom heard the other side of Suez.

Brunéau's 'Le Roi Candale' has recently been produced at the Opéra-Comique, without, however, greatly adding to the prestige of modern opera. Mozart's 'Così fan Tutte,' which is being given regularly, is of greater musical value.

GEORGE CECHI.

ROME

'HOW "LOHENGRIN" CAME TO ITALY'

Apropos the recent production of 'Lohengrin' at Rome, the *Piccolo* has fished out an interesting piece of scandal of bygone days, which it has published with the above title.

As is well-known, up to 1870 Wagner was regarded as a semi-barbarian here, his 'music of the future' being ridiculed; the few musicians who thought it worth while to make a pilgrimage to Bavaria receiving a very cold shoulder when they returned.

It seems that in 1868, when Verdi's 'Don Carlos' was staged at the Comunale at Bologna, Angelo Mariani, at that time the leading conductor of Italy, was desperately in love with the prima-donna, the famous Rosine Stoltz. Verdi assisted at the recitals, and Mariani was not slow to perceive that the singer 'made eyes' not at himself, but at the composer. Irritated beyond measure, Mariani poured his laments into the ears of his sympathetic colleagues, and one evening came out with, 'But I'll get even; I warrant that in two years' time I will have imported Wagner's "Lohengrin" into Italy.' He kept his word, and it was at the Comunale that 'Lohengrin' began its triumphal progress in Italy, and opened a way for all the great Wagnerian cycle. But Verdi did not take it ill, and when asked what one ought to understand by the phrase 'music of the future,' the immortal composer replied: 'It seems to me perfectly clear; music of the future means music that lasts.'

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PLAIN SPEAKING

In the Italian Chamber the Hon. Benelli, one of the foremost dramatists of the day, has notified the Minister of Public Works in the following terms, concerning a matter that has also recently become exigent in England. He says:

'Having regard to the fact that (a) the sixty per cent. increase of the railway tariff gravely affects every dramatic company in Italy—some, perhaps, irreparably; (b) the State does nothing and never has done anything to assist such companies, many of which devotedly carry a ray of light to places where, owing to the supineness of the rich or the poverty or indifference of the municipalities, Art would never penetrate; (c) the State receives from the theatre more revenue than from any other industry: It is desired to ask whether the Minister does not intend to concede to such companies at least some amelioration of the existing tariffs? The State would suffer small hurt; it would, indeed, gain more from other sources, while Art would be greatly benefited. But if something be not done, general ruin, hastened by contributory considerations, will reduce Italian theatrical undertakings to a condition much inferior to those of the smallest European States.' It will be remembered that in Italy the railways are a State monopoly.

THE AUGUSTEO

An artistic event of the first importance has been the visit of Toscanini with his orchestra. Two concerts were given, the programme of the first comprising:

Concerto in A minor, for strings	...	Vivaldi
Symphony No. 5	...	Beethoven
Dance (from 'Three Hebrew poems')	...	Bloch
Serenata	...	Tomasini
'Le Fontane di Roma'	...	Respighi
'Iberia'	...	Debussy
'Tannhäuser' Overture	...	Wagner

Of this programme only the third item perhaps is new to my readers. Ernest Bloch is as yet unknown here, although in America he is popular. As Toscanini has taken him up, perhaps it were well if musicians made his acquaintance. His history is interesting—even romantic. Born at Geneva in 1880, of a Jewish family, he had no musical antecedents. Nevertheless, at the age of eleven years, he made a vow to devote himself to music. This vow he wrote on a piece of paper, and solemnly burned in the open air on an altar of stones erected to—Orpheus! His parents opposed his desire, but nevertheless he succeeded in going to Brussels, Frankfort (where he passed a year with Ivan Knorr), Munich (where he studied with Thulie), and Paris. In 1924 he returned to his native city, where he had to contend with great difficulties—artistic, as well as those having a family origin—and to avert financial disaster he consented to assume his father's occupation of cloth merchant. In 1910 his 'Macbeth' failed at the Opéra-Comique, while soon afterwards professional jealousy succeeded in depriving him of the direction of the Neuenburg concerts, and later, of his post as professor of composition in the Geneva Conservatory. Nevertheless, Bloch pluckily continued the fight, and has now won the battle—if not yet in Europe, at any rate in America. It must be confessed, however, that the specimen of his work submitted did not make a very favourable impression at the Augusteo.

The second programme contained:

Concerto per il 'Santissimo Natale' (for strings)	...	Manfredini
Symphony No. 7	...	Beethoven
'Piemonte' (suite on popular themes)	...	Sinigaglia
'Le festin de l'araignée'	...	Roussel
'Tristan and Isolde' (Prelude, and death of Isolde)	...	Wagner

An extremely regrettable and annoying incident threatened to rain this second concert. For some reason best known to themselves, the employees of the electric-light station felt aggrieved, and, with diabolical malice, arranged to strike at the critical hour on Sunday afternoon when all the public spectacles were in full swing. Their plan succeeded only too well, and at 5 p.m. the electric light failed in all parts of the city. In the Augusteo, Beethoven's seventh Symphony had reached the last movement, and naturally

had to be suspended. The authorities had made no provision for such a *contredépôt*, and, incredible as it may seem, the vast hall remained in almost complete darkness for nigh half an hour, when the audience was afforded the ludicrous spectacle of seeing a packet of candles arrive for the orchestra! These were distributed, and fixed about on the stands, on the edge of the platform, &c., a graceful row of a dozen or so decorating the cover of the grand pianoforte. With this primitive illumination, the remainder of the programme was completed.

LEONARD PEYTON.

VIENNA

Very little that requires comment has occurred here since my last notes. Two performances of 'Parsifal' were given at the State Opera on October 31 and November 1, with the same artists each evening. These performances were notable principally for the splendid work of Frau Wildbrunn, a guest from the Berlin State Opera, as Kundry. During her stay here this artist also appeared in the 'Ring' (Brünnhilda) and 'Fidelio' (Leonora). Another guest of note has been Cornelius Brongsreest, also of Berlin, who sustained with success the parts of Rigoletto and Papageno. He has also been heard in 'Madame Butterfly,' 'Carmen,' and 'The Huguenots.' On November 23, performances were given of Korngold's two operas, 'The Ring of Polykrates' and 'Violante,' under the direction of the composer.

We are promised a Beethoven Festival for the second week of December. The scheme comprises a number of concerts and a performance of 'Fidelio' at the State Opera. The principal concert will be held on December 12 in the Belvedere Palace in the style of the time when Beethoven was living and composing at Vienna, and will be under the direction of Dr. Schalk, of the Opera.

Puccini's three one-Act pieces are apparently a big draw here, and performances are being given once every week.

S. WINNEY.

Miscellaneous

There is usually a touch of reasonable unconventionality about the doings of the Norwich Handel Society under Mr. Ernest Harcourt's direction. In its performance of 'Acis and Galatea' at St. Andrew's Hall, on November 20, this took the form of 'fancy dress' for the principals and most of the choir, and as much dramatic action as could be reconciled with a concert setting and the necessity, in the case of one principal, for having a copy of the music to sing from. The performance gave all-round satisfaction. Earlier in the day the Society had given a chamber concert at which an agreeable Violin and Pianoforte Sonata by Mr. Harcourt had been performed.

Owing to the date (December 30—January 2) of the Scarborough Festival we are unable to report upon it in this issue. The announced programme included concert-versions of Mr. Alick Maclean's 'Quentin Durward' and 'The Hunchback of Cremona,' his choral work 'The Annunciation,' and works of Bantock, Delius, Elgar, and Quilter. The Hallé Orchestra and Sir Henry Wood, Dr. Coward's, Sheffield Choir, and many well-known soloists were to take part.

Many news items arrived too late for insertion in the present issue, which went to press earlier than usual owing to the Christmas holidays. Of the matter held over, however, a good deal should have been sent earlier. Secretaries of choral societies and others concerned should send programmes, &c., within a day or two of the concert. On December 23 we received particulars of events that had happened two or three weeks previously.

The British Music Society has inaugurated a London Contemporary Music Centre for performing—at first in private—unknown MS. and published music, in all except orchestral forms, by living British composers. Information is obtainable from Mr. Philip Wilson, 10, Berners Street, W.1.

Mr. W. Smith Woods has retired from his position as Lecturer in Music at Warrington Training College, after thirty-seven years' service. Mr. Smith Woods was also Lecturer in Music at the Liverpool University Training College from 1892 to 1920.

The Glastonbury Festival Play, 'Bethlehem,' set as a choral drama by Rutland Boughton, will be given at Glastonbury on January 3, 4, and 5. Principal parts will be taken by Miss Dorothy Silk, Mr. William Bennett, and Mr. Steuart Wilson.

A series of five chamber concerts at Museum Hall, Babacombe, came to an end on December 8, when the programme included the first performance of a Violoncello Sonata in E minor, Op. 15, by Harold Rhodes.

In order to avoid increased postage on this issue, we have omitted the *Competition Festival Record*. It will be sent to subscribers who apply for it.

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